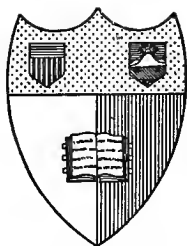


# DOWN THE ROAD

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WILLIAM VALENTINE KELLEY





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# DOWN THE ROAD

AND OTHER ESSAYS OF NATURE,  
LIFE, LITERATURE, AND RELIGION

By WILLIAM VALENTINE KELLEY

AUTHOR OF

"The Ripening Experience of Life," "Trees and Men," "The Illumined Face,"  
"Glimpses of the Soul of Gilder," etc.

"High overhead the quivering aspens, whirled  
By evening winds; and, over dale and down,  
*The highway, winding to some happy town  
Beyond the purple borders of the world.*"



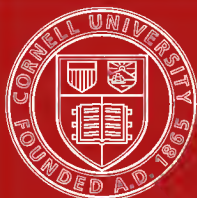
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TO  
THE DEAR AND SACRED MEMORY  
OF  
MY FATHER AND MOTHER

“They knew my love, and, wheresoe’er they be,  
Their spirits know. There is no need of vow  
Of fond remembrance,—yet there is for me  
A kind of comfort to avouch it now.”



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## CONTENTS

NATURE	PAGE
Down the Road.....	3
Pleasures and Pains of Foreign Travel.....	15
Vagabondia .....	50
An Idyll of Idleness.....	63
Emerson in the Adirondacks.....	71
Beside the Sea.....	78
Sunrise at Sea.....	88

LIFE	
In the Hospital.....	93
Oscar Wilde: The Consummate Flower of Æstheticism..	105
A Doctor's Confession.....	135
Robert Browning in His Wife's Letters.....	151
Other People in Mrs. Browning's Letters.....	167
Heated Machinery.....	181
About Cupids .....	188

LITERATURE	
The Author of "Rab and His Friends".....	195
Emily Dickinson: The Hermit Thrush of Amherst.....	214
The Deification of "One of the Roughts": Walt Whitman.	284
A Glance at Alfred Noyes's Poetry.....	297
A Critic's Estimate of Parsifal.....	306
Francis Thompson on Shelley.....	311
Lanier's Devout Ballad.....	318

RELIGION	
A Word from William Arthur.....	323
A Romantic Christ.....	333
A Lay Sermon.....	357
A Southern Evangelist.....	372
The Imitation of Christ.....	383
"A Succession of States of Consciousness".....	390
Burying Mathematics.....	402
"We Have Seen His Star".....	405
The Religion of Gilder's Poetry.....	411



## PREFACE

THE preface to a volume of English essays began with this invitation: "Signor—Signora, walk aside with me. I have studied eight or nine wise words to speak to you." What proportion of the words of these collected essays may be wise or otherwise is a matter to be adjudged not by the author but by such readers as may walk aside with it for a saunter down life's road.

If to a modicum of justifying wisdom some touch or taste of pleasure here and there be found for the reader's relish, the author's pleasure will exceed the reader's.

And if any reader can hear floating across some page, above the author's voice, some strain from "the choir invisible whose music is the gladness of the world," and, over all, the accents of the supreme and only potent Voice which sounds across the stormy centuries, bidding mankind "Be of good cheer," it may be regarded as a token of the saving interference and controlling superintendence of the Master of all sincere workmen, to Whom, with due obeisance of spirit, the book, with all the rest of life's endeavors, is reverently submitted as one more small offering of "man's nothing-perfect to God's All-Complete."



To keep in sight Perfection, and adore  
The vision, is the artist's best delight  
His bitterest pang, that he can do no more  
Than keep her longed-for loveliness in sight.  
—William Watson.

In an imperfect world, man has the vision of perfection,  
And, with aspiring spirit, strives to give  
His eyes the form of what in him aspires;  
His ears the sound of that diviner speech he longs to speak;  
His soul the proud content of having  
Touched the skirts of perfect things.

—Bayard Taylor.

I have gone the whole round of creation: I saw and I spoke:  
I, a work of God's hand for that purpose, received in my  
brain  
And pronounced on the rest of his handwork—returned  
him again  
His creation's approval or censure: I spoke as I saw:  
I report, as a man may of God's work—all's love, yet all's  
law.  
Now I lay down the judgeship he lent me. Each faculty  
tasked  
To perceive him, has gained an abyss, where a dewdrop was  
asked.  
Have I knowledge? confounded it shrivels at Wisdom laid  
bare.  
Have I forethought? how purblind, how blank, to the Infinite  
Care!  
Do I task any faculty highest, to image success?  
I but open my eyes—and *perfection, no more and no less,*  
In the kind I imagined, *full-fronts me,* and God is seen God  
In the star, in the stone, in the flesh, in the soul and the  
clod.  
*And thus looking within and around me, I ever renew*  
*(With that stoop of the soul which in bending upraises it*  
*too)*  
*The submission of man's nothing-perfect to God's all-com-*  
*plete,*  
*As by each new obeisance in spirit, I climb to his feet.*

—Browning, in "Saul."

Human life is not final achievement; it is endless endeavor. Success is a delusion. Pygmalion, before his perfect statue, is not successful—for it might live and speak. Raphael, finishing the Sistine Madonna, is not successful—for her beauty has revealed to him a finer and an unattainable beauty.

—*George William Curtis.*

Be sure no earnest work  
Of any honest creature fails so much  
It is not gathered as a grain of sand  
To enlarge the sum of human action used  
For carrying out God's end. No creature  
Works so ill, observe, that therefore he's cashiered—  
The honest earnest man must stand and work.  
Whoever fears God, fears to sit at ease.

. . . . .  
Let us be content, in work,  
To do the thing we can, and not presume  
To fret because it's little.

—*Mrs. Browning, in "Aurora Leigh."*

**NATURE**





## DOWN THE ROAD

A CHARMING English book of years ago was entitled "The Harvest of a Quiet Eye." Such harvest waits just down the road to be reaped by any observant eye and musing mind. The common roadside is rich and wonderful with treasures surpassing the costliest collection of *bijouterie*, or bric-à-brac ever kept under lock and key. Lancelot Andrewes, an old divine, centuries ago took pleasure in recording how, when a Cambridge undergraduate, he used to make the journey to his home in London on foot, observing, as he walked, the "grass, herbs, corn, trees, cattle, earth, water, heavens, and any of the creatures, contemplating their natures, orders, qualities, virtues, uses"; and this was to him, he says, "the greatest mirth, contentment, and recreation that could be." Huxley often spoke of the enjoyment he found in the "constitutionals" he was in the habit of taking on the roads about Eastbourne, and once said to a friend: "I delight in the simplest rural scenery. A country field has before now entranced me. One thing which weighs with me against pessimism and tells for a benevolent Author of the universe is my enjoyment of scenery and music. I do not see how they can have helped in the struggle for existence. They are gratuitous gifts." It seems that a skep-

tic on a country road is liable to be struck with a sense of the divine goodness and to feel the rudiments of a doxology starting in his involuntary soul. He must have noticed also many other "gratuitous gifts" lavished by the Creator unnecessarily upon the world, which the scientist cannot account for on any theory of necessity or utility to the struggle for existence. Listen to that soliloquizing warbler in the wood's edge yonder, whose superfluous ecstatic song floats across the road.

That's the wise thrush.  
He sings each song twice over,  
Lest you should think he never could recapture  
That first fine, careless rapture;

and also lest the naturalist should go on thinking that all things can be explained as products developed in and by the struggle for existence. Nature's extravagance at every turn convicts such theories of inadequacy.

Christina Rossetti, sauntering down a country road, found in the ditch a broken bottle which, having been oxidized, displayed a variety of iridescent tints, not brilliantly but as in a minor key, a sort of dull rainbow, and she experienced from it as much pleasure as she would in the lovely tints of rare old Venetian glass or in the bended bow upon the clouds of heaven. Watts-Dunton confesses to having lingered long over a patch of many-colored mosses on an old wayside apple tree, which "looked as if embossed with

miniature forests in jewel work." A stroll down almost any road may prove interesting, if not eventful, to a mind at leisure from itself, impressionable and ready to be active on the mildest hint; and almost any small objective fact, dropping into notice like a nickel in the slot of a gramophone, can set the mental faculties to playing like an orchestra. Edison has made no phonographic cylinder quite so responsive as the revolving mind.

An ordinary wayfarer, going down a quiet road which serpentine among the hills "through silent symphonies of summer green," may have a succession of incidental experiences which, however trivial in the record, serve to enliven for him half a summer's day. First he meets a little nut-brown maid, led by the hand by her ten-year-old sister along the smooth track which bicycles make on the side of the highway.

"What's your name?" says the strolling stranger.

"Her name's Pearl," answers the bigger sister.

"How old are you?" continues the catechist.

"She's three," responds the spokeswoman.

"Shake hands," he says, reaching toward the brown-faced wee one, admiring her bright eyes, bulging cheeks, and pretty mouth.

She draws away coyly, seeming to decline acquaintanceship; but as the strange man moves off, shaking his hand toward her and saying, "Good-by," in the gentlest tone he can command,

she melts into a coquettish smile, and, as her sense of safety grows with the increasing distance between him and her, she says a clear and sweet "Dood-by." The retiring stranger doubts, as he goes, whether the weighing and measuring scientist can analyze the infinitely variable and elusive, but all-subduing, charm which lives and rules in the face of a lovely child, or can account for it by the muttering pretentiousness of his "struggle-for-existence" theories.

Further down the road the man meets Whittier's "Barefoot Boy," a rugged, stocky nine-year-old, big brother, it seems, to little Pearl. The boy faces the approaching stranger boldly, and inspects him fearlessly. He stands sturdily on both feet, entirely aplomb with the universe, with no more look of obsequiousness than if he were a lord and owned the county, although one cannot be certain that this incipient American sovereign owns even a pair of shoes.

"Good afternoon! What's your name?"

"Jack Quartz."

"Where do you live?"

"In the second house there."

"What do you do around here?"

"O, everything."

"And what is everything?"

"O, dig in the dirt and everything."

Jacky's last words make the stroller think, with mental nausea, as he passes on, of a scurvy crew of writers whose everything is to dig in the dirt

—decadent, degenerate, diseased minds, whose madness is not like Nebuchadnezzar's, nibbling clean grass, but swinish, wallowing in putrid filth—and he sees floating in the air, like the blurred black spots of a bilious headache, the faces and names of a dozen such—names better unmentioned on these pure pages; writers who, if they had eyes to see themselves, would feel as Keawe did, in Louis Stevenson's story of "The Bottle Imp," when, on the night after his betrothal to Kokua, he sat on the edge of the marble bath in his Bright House, and "spied upon his flesh a patch like a patch of lichen on a rock," and knew that the proper place for him was on the north coast of Molokai, at Kalaupapa, between the huge cliffs and the sea breakers, where the pallid lepers dry up and rot away and drop piecemeal into the grave. Realists these writers call themselves, and of them Lowell said: "The so-called realist sometimes raises doubts in my mind when he assures me that he, and he alone, gives me the facts of life. All I can say is that, if these are the facts, I do not want them. The police reports give me all that I call for every day. But are they the facts? The real and abiding facts are those that are recognized as such by the soul when it is in that upper chamber of our being which is farthest removed from the senses."

It rained the other day, and not every place has dried up. The man going down the road stops to look at a flock of butterflies sitting on the mud

in the broad ditch, opening and shutting their yellow wings. Why do such clean-looking creatures prefer a mud puddle to a clover field? The butterfly once had a good reputation. It used to sit on Psyche's arm and be the emblem of immortality. A poet called it "a flower with a soul in it." Of late it is less respectable, having become a synonym for light-headed foolishness and fickleness. And just now it, or rather the male of the species, is brought by the naturalists into special disrepute; for it is said that he is a guzzling tippler, who idles around and will get drunk whenever any intoxicant is accessible, while the lady butterfly, like an exemplary housewife, occupies her time in laying eggs and otherwise attending soberly to business. One minister confesses that he has not been able to be wholly comfortable in the presence of these diurnal lepidoptera since reading Kipling's verse:

The toad under the harrow knows  
Exactly where each tooth-point goes.  
A butterfly upon the road  
Preaches contentment to that toad.

In which verse the butterfly appears as a preacher tossing off easy exhortations in a flippant way, flitting lightly over sufferers who writhe in agony with lacerated vitals, an unfeeling preacher offering cheap advice to those who are deep in the bitterness of trials he does not take the trouble to know anything about. One minister fears that he must sometimes have seemed to people in

dire trouble like an uncomprehending or unsympathizing butterfly, preaching patience to one whose flesh was torn and bones broken under the harrow. It is a pastor's business to hold himself so close against the sufferings and sorrows of his people that the iron of their agony shall in some degree enter into his own soul, so that when he speaks to them it shall be quiveringly and with tears in his voice. Unsympathetic advice, dropped by prosperous and comfortable butterflies flitting over, is exasperating to the sufferer. Some thoughtful day some literary socialist will frame Kipling's verse and hang it on the walls of his clubroom. Similar words already answer back from the submerged tenth to the glib admonitions and prescriptions let fall upon them by dainty visitors from the superincumbent nine tenths floating airily above their deep and dreadful misery. The toad under the harrow would like to exchange places with the butterfly, but does not thank him for his fluent and flippant advice. Consideration and compassion toward his fellow men become every man. Shortly before his sudden death Ian Maclaren wrote in an album: "Be pitiful. Every man is fighting a hard fight."

A little further down the road up limps, with feigned or exaggerated infirmity, the professional beggar, known as such by his brazen face and artificial whine, as also by the doggerel appeal for alms, printed on a soiled card which he

unblushingly presents. The falsehood on which this particular lazy liar travels is that he has scrofulous sores in obscure places, and is collecting money to go to the Hot Springs of Arkansas. Here, unabashed, though shamed by diligent bees, by busy self-supporting birds, by provident squirrels, and even by black tumblebugs which work on the road and roll their big ball along with commendable push and persistency, this indolent fellow begs. He too should be put to work on the road, and so lifted toward the level of the industrious tumblebug's respectability.

A dead snake on the road makes the pedestrian wonder how it is that the supposedly most astute of animals, the serpent, which in some times and places has figured as the symbol of wisdom, so often manages to cross the highway just in the nick of time to be run over by a passing vehicle or to have his head bruised by the woman's seed, between whom and himself there abides, in biblical fulfillment, an accentuated and implacable enmity; under whose heel his jaws gap open and his impotent forked tongue protrudes, flickering as if trying to say, "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?"

A shadow passes suddenly over the stroller's spirit at sight of a long black vehicle, slow, sedate, and somber, approaching from the distance—the chariot of the dead; not a shining city equipage with urns, fringes, tassels, and plate-glass sides, but a rusty-looking, shabby-genteel



affair which has been kept in a barn, where the chickens roosted on it. It is known that a landscape takes on a more picturesque appearance if one views it from a reclining position, lying on his side; but a hearse has no use for windows, for the horizontal passenger inside rides on his back and has lost interest in earthly scenery. This particular death-cart carries now the body of a young man who gradually died by coughing himself away at a camp on one of the islands in the lake—a “camper” and a “lunger,” as pulmonary patients are colloquially named by the dwellers among these mountains. He came too late to nature’s great sanitarium of the North Woods, which have saved many lives of those who came early enough; he has finished life too early; and now the portable remnant of him is riding to take the night train for home, going as baggage in the baggage car because of what it is, yet traveling on a passenger ticket in memory of its former dignity; going to be met with love and tears, and to be laid to rest prematurely under the astonished grass of some far-off family burial plot.

The westering sun and cooling air give notice that “it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.” The man turns about near a cluster of humble homes and retraces his steps. Soon he hears swift footsteps behind him, and in a moment a comely young woman from one of the little houses passes him on a run to meet a young

man coming along the road, upon whom she flings herself with her arms around his neck and a resounding kiss upon his lips, careless of the proximity of the stranger, who feels that he has witnessed a sacred and typical scene in this hearty welcome, at the day's end, of the working man by the waiting woman. Instantly he remembers another summer evening when, walking with a friend past the Portuguese settlement at Martha's Vineyard, he heard the explosive and ecstatic shout of a sunburned five-year-old, "Poppy! Poppy!" and saw the India-rubber boy spring from the doorstep and bounce off the ground like a ball into the muscular arms of his stalwart father. Such scenes are typical, enacted daily at millions of thresholds. Widespread over the civilized earth is the eager and blessed happiness which leaps in honest homes when wife and children give loyal welcome to the breadwinner home-arriving from his day's toil, with his work done and, let us hope, his labor prosperous and his wages righteous and sure.

Among the home-comers whom the man meets on the road is one of the guides who carry tourists in their light Adirondack boats through the innumerable lakes. The guide recognizes the man, and says, "I saw you in church last Sunday."

"Yes; how many churches have you in the village?"

"We've got four."

"And which is the strongest?"

"Well, it's nip and tuck, which and t'other, 'twixt Methodist and Catholic. You see, the difference is this: the Catholics git aout; they git aout. They calc'late to git there every Sunday. Now, with other folks, they let every little thing keep 'em from meetin'; and sometimes they're there, and sometimes they ain't. That's how it is."

The man, reapproaching his stopping place, sees standing on the porch a round chub of a girl, exactly eight years old, with crinkly brown hair snugly braided in two short plaits between her plump shoulders, with pink-and-white cheeks like a peach; good to look at and pleasant to be smiled on by; a cool and self-possessed little maid, not likely, if she saw a mouse or even a snake, to do as Freedom did when Kosciusko fell. In the mind of one guest, who does not know her real name, she goes by the name of "Little Allee Samee," ever since a day when he witnessed a brief disciplinary episode in which she played the principal part. Eight-years-old, for some good reason, wanted wee three-years-old, of whom for the moment she had charge, to go with her around the corner of the house, and he would not. He shook his willful, or won't-ful, curly head and said, "No!" Then, as a mother cat might lug a kitten, though not with her teeth, eight-years-old promptly picked up that rebellious man-child and carried him, struggling and squealing, whither

she would, despite the fact that he would not, cheerily saying, as she triumphantly swung him along, "But you're going, allee samee, mister, whether you want to or not." It is encouraging to think that there is likely to be wholesome family government in one home when "Allee Samee" grows up, and one good woman who will probably show herself a well-poised and competent domestic disciplinarian.

## PLEASURES AND PAINS OF FOREIGN TRAVEL

MARY the maid with a book in her hand comes into the library where the lady of the house is sitting, and says: "I found this book upstairs, ma'am, and was told to bring it down to the library. Does it make any difference on which shelf I put it?"

"Why, all the difference in the world, Mary. We have had the whole library classified—scientific works, religious, history, fiction, etc. What is the book you have there?"

"'The Pursuit of Happiness,' ma'am."

"Well, then," says her ladyship, "that goes right in with the books of travel."

This lady was not so far wrong as she might have been, for we all know that he who would overtake happiness must sometimes be a good deal of a traveler; and, on the other hand, well-conducted travel, when the duties of life leave us free to it, and conditions are favorable, is about as likely to be a successful pursuit of happiness as anything earthly. To the prosperous pursuit of pleasure by travel a few things are essential: a consecutive outline plan of places to be visited based on an intelligent knowledge as to why they should be visited; the lightest possible luggage; a minimum of clothing, and that durable for the

wear and tear of travel and rough weather—in the language of the great Dr. Johnson, “garments of abnormal spissitude and closely reticulated texture”; cheerful company of congenial tastes, habits, and purposes.

The traveler, in proportion to his intelligence and sensibility, will be full of keen interest and eager expectancy as he approaches the Old World, in which all to him is new. A man who has traveled in every State of our Union and in all countries of Europe declares that he never again can have on earth anything like the ecstasy he felt when he first sighted the coast and planted his feet on the soil of Europe. There is always a peculiar piquancy in a first time. Never again, perhaps, will land look so edenic as did green Ireland, the land of the shamrock, rising out of the gray sea; and later as we coasted up Saint George’s Channel in sight of its sloping fields verdurous with May and flowered with yellow furze. Who can forget the first time he rolled in under the smoke of great London and rattled away through the narrow, somber, dingy streets, and the din of that vast city? One man can never forget what thoughts he had when he first noted the broken arches of ruined aqueducts fly past the car windows, and, looking out, saw the great dome of Saint Peter’s far away against the sky; presently alighted from the train at the foot of the Viminal Hill and carried his satchel past the Baths of Diocletian; found himself riding

where the Cæsars rode, under the identical walls which looked on Prisoner Paul as the soldiers took him along eighteen hundred years ago, among the seven petty little hillocks which tower so mountainous in history, from which an empire overlooked and overpowered the world; saying to himself with a thrill, "This is Rome, the Eternal City, and I am really here in old Rome." Who did not swoon into a delicious mental trance when he first stepped from the railway station into a gondola, sank back half-reclining on the low cushions, and lay there dreamily while the strange black boat swam away with him, silent and graceful as a swan, thridding the canals with its high polished beak, moving through the air and barely deigning to touch the water, gliding phantomlike under bridges and past the portals of picturesque palaces whose foundations have been lapped by soft Adriatic ripples ever since the splendid days when Venice ruled the commerce of the world? Charles Sumner to the end of his life was full of rapturous reminiscences of his first visit to Europe, and especially of a solitary summer he spent in Rome in his young manhood: from early dawn till bedtime the long, sweet hours of study, the ramblings out on the Campagna and about the venerable streets of Papal Rome, life seeming to stand still in one blessed pause of peace and high intellectual reverie. He called that delicious Roman summer the "Lost Garden" of his existence.

When you travel carry your romance with you. Let nothing dampen it. Let nobody badger it out of you. Be strong-minded enough to keep it. Bring that victory home with you, and so show that you were not quite unworthy to walk where the Cæsar's chariot rolled, being something of a conqueror yourself. Never mind if some prosy person smiles at your enthusiasm. In Paris, the pastor of the American Chapel, who was, like Ulysses, a much-traveled man, told a certain young man he would get over his romance when he reached Italy. The fleas would take it out of him if nothing else did. The young man resolved on the spot that the Paris pastor should be a false prophet, and so he proved. That young man took the whole curriculum of fleas—lay in the Villa di Roma at Naples while the fleeting hours of the soft Italian night and other nimble things skipped over him; he tossed and squirmed, and at last, tired out, fell into uneasy slumber and dreamed that the poisoned shirt of Nessus had been put on him; he woke stung with a sense of outrage all over his body, and, defenseless against his foes as Macbeth against the ghost of Banquo, he cried, "Come, O mine enemies, as the 'rugged Russian bear, the armed rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan tiger,' take any shape that hath dimensions and is big enough to hit and we will lay you, heaps on heaps, as Samson did the Philistines!" He suffered all this, and many "moving accidents by flood and field," without having one



drop of romantic blood bled out of his veins. Indeed, he even aspired to cultivate the tender philosophy of good Cardinal Bellarmino, who used patiently to let the fleas bite him, saying, "We shall have heaven for our sufferings, but these poor creatures have nothing except this present life."

Far better as a condition and channel of personal benefit and enjoyment are reverent sentiment and romantic enthusiasm than, for example, the flippant spirit of the baseball nine who went to see where the Pilgrims came ashore from the Mayflower and wondered why the Fathers didn't land on the wharf; then they thrust their feet through the iron railing which now protects Plymouth Rock in an effort to touch the sacred stone, and expressed a historic doubt whether the Pilgrims had feet that were small enough to slip through that railing and land on that rock. Various other historic doubts, broached gravely, have no better warrant. And a disposition to positive rapture on slight excuse is preferable to a fault-finding temper. Coleridge tells of a smart cockney who could see nothing in Dannecker's beautiful statue of Ariadne at Frankfort-on-the-Main but the few blue spots in the marble, which made him "think," he said, "of Stilton cheese." Fault-finders and fretful people neither get good nor give comfort anywhere. The only advantage in their going abroad is that the folks at home get rid of them for the time being.

Enthusiasm needs to be a steady glow, and not a fitful spark, if it is to stand the strain of travel, for endurance will often be tested to the utmost. Unscrupulous rascals will exasperate your righteous soul, and a thousand mean vexations will try your temper. You will sometimes be utterly weary, as was one of a company who said, toward the end of a long, hard, exhausting day of sight-seeing, "I don't want anybody to speak to me to-night, for I'm too tired to be civil." A first-rate traveler should have fortitude like Mrs. Bishop's, who, when bitten by an Oriental centipede, screamed no screams, but coolly cut out the bite with a penknife, squeezed it, and poured ammonia recklessly over the smarting wound; and who, when her feet were so swollen with various bites that stockings were an impossibility, sewed them up in linen and traveled in that condition. This was fortitude fit to be called fiftytude.

After landing in Europe the first great city you strike will probably be London, the heart of an empire greater than the Roman, and the commercial center of the world. It contains more Jews than all Palestine, more Irish than Dublin, more Scotchmen than Edinburgh, and more Roman Catholics than Rome. It has a population of six or seven millions. In its growth it has overlapped and absorbed over fifty villages, the names of which are still retained to designate the corresponding quarters of the city, as Chel-

sea, Whitechapel, Bloomsbury, Brompton, and Paddington. When you read the morning papers in the English metropolis, you may be surprised at the small space given to the affairs of your own great and glorious country, and that mostly occupied with the cotton crops, lynching of Negroes, election riots, reports from the cattle ranches, failure of mining companies, and such like. You may sometimes be amazed at the ignorance that prevails concerning America. A few years ago a photograph could be seen in the Alexandra palace in London labeled, "A View of N. Y. City from the Illinois shore." You read of disastrous forest fires in Milwaukee. Dr. Chalmers once told Dr. S. H. Cox that if he ever visited our country, he would go first to Kentucky to see Yale College. Mr. Edmund Gosse says that even some highly educated people in England are very ignorant of the condition of society in the United States. He knows English artists who think Central Park a dangerous place to sketch in because of the Indians. Some years ago a great tragedian declined to come to New York lest the savages should take his scalp. A young Briton, newly landed in New York, asked a policeman the nearest way to the buffalo hunting grounds. The policeman sent him over to Buffalo Bill's Wild West show at the Madison Square Garden. Professor Silliman, of Yale, was asked by a lady in London society, "Professor, wherever did you learn to speak English?"

Americans have been known to take a sly revenge on this foreign ignorance. "Do they speak English in your country?" said a young English lady to an American girl. "Yes," was the quiet reply, "many do. It is taught in some of the schools, you know, and I learned it before I came to England." A Harvard graduate was asked in Birmingham if Boston were not the seat of the American Parliament, and the rogue said promptly with a perfectly sober face, "Yes, it was, up to the beginning of the Christian era, at which time it was transferred to Saint Paul, Minnesota."

It may be a painful surprise to find that there are people who don't like Americans. Your idea of your personal importance may come into collision with the Englishman's consciousness of lofty superiority, and the first time you encounter the superciliousness of the full-blooded Briton you may have peculiar emotions and thoughts too deep for tears. You will understand what Tennyson means in his "Maud," when he speaks of people who,

curling a contumelious lip,  
Gorgonize you from head to foot  
With a stony British stare.

You read in the London Telegraph that your dear native land is ugly to the eye because it is without hedges, and that no man's statement is worth two cents in America unless it is backed up by an offer to bet ten dollars. You take up Vanity

Fair and find a letter complaining to the editor against "the regular autumnal plague of wandering Yankees," who "as a race are simply unendurable, the vulgarest, shallowest, most uninteresting people under the sun"; and the letter closes mournfully with this lament, "Their nasal twang is heard in all our streets, and their keen vulpine faces stare from every hotel window." Or you may find in the London Times this amiable effort to enable you to see yourselves as others see you: "It is everywhere acknowledged that the crowd of tourists composed of the best English society is thinner this year than usual. It is swamped in the common variety of tourists and lower classes of America, whom even the republican aristocrats of New York would regard with doubt. The Americans follow the English by an unerring instinct into every pleasant retreat where we desire to sulk or amuse ourselves alone. Nice, Pau, and Cannes, once English preserves, can now hardly be distinguished from American cities. The same thing is true of Homburg. The English sparrow is being pushed out of its nest by the Yankee cuckoo. Our only revenge is found in the conviction that, if we are disliked on the Continent, the Americans are more disliked. They inherit our unpopularity abroad, being more unsympathetic and aggressive, while the special aggravation of the Yankee voice and accent embitters their relations with less strident races. It is useless to have Chicago

exhibitions unless the American people can by education or medical science uproot the national voice, which is at present a blight on all social relations and makes all American diplomacy at foreign courts impossible." Possibly you may have been prepared for such sweet language by reading in the New York Sun before leaving home the following letter from a burly Briton sojourning in the United States:

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SUN—Sir: I know Englishmen, by personal acquaintance, to be more manly, more honest, cleaner in mind, and purer in morals than Americans. Of course, I speak of the average. You measure, or affect to measure, yourselves with Englishmen. It is absurd. You are fifty years behind in refinement, in civilization, and humanity. Your laws are a farce and your boasted Constitution a humbug. Your big criminals, your murderers, your thieves, your boodlers, tear through the meshes of your law provided they have money or influence, while your wretched poor are treated with Draconic severity. I know you. I know your young men, with their minds full of lubricity and rapacity, unspeakably foul; and conscious of your depravity you think to square yourselves by making faces at Englishmen.

When you have duly contemplated such pictures of yourself and your fellow countrymen, it may console you a little to take up the Fortnightly Review, in which Sir Lepel Griffin, just back from your native land, sweetly tells his countrymen that "the English are not popular in America," and that "there is no reason why they should be, for," he says, "Englishmen have fought and bullied in every quarter of the globe; they are the most disagreeable race extant, and are

often unendurable to each other; nor," he adds, "is there any part of Europe, except perhaps Hungary, where they are not even more disliked than in the United States."

In such blunders as you may happen to make in a strange land, you can take comfort by remembering some of the mistakes of foreign visitors to your own country. There was the wife of an English poet who said to another lady in Boston, "I'm so glad to get to America, for now I shall have the long-wished-for pleasure of tasting a canvas-back clam"; and there was the burly Briton who called on Longfellow at his home in Cambridge and introduced himself thus: "Is this Mr. Longfellow? Well, sir, as you have no ruins in your country, I thought—I thought—I would come and see you!" When Oscar Wilde drawled in the ear of the wife of a United States senator, "Ah, but you have no ruins, no curiosities in this country," the lady mischievously answered the long-haired æsthete, "No, but our ruins will come soon enough, and at present," looking straight at Oscar, "we import our curiosities."

In "misty, moisty England" you may soon learn to take an umbrella every time you go out, for "it rains, or it has just been raining, or it is just going to rain." Byron wrote of English weather: "I like the weather when it is not rainy; that is, I like two months of every year." You have heard that London fog is at times so dense

that you can stick your cane in it and thereupon hang your hat. Ruskin used to rave against London smoke, "sulphurous chimney-pot vomit of loathsome blackguardly cloud." We were told some time ago that "the weight of the great smoke cloud daily hanging over the city of London has been computed by Professor Roberts at fifty tons of solid carbon and two hundred and fifty tons of hydrocarbon and carbonic oxide gases for each day of the year, and its value at £2,000,000 per annum." And owing to clouds and fog and smoke, altogether it appears by carefully kept scientific records that London enjoys, on the year's average, less than three hours of sunshine a day. There is a good story about an eloquent English bishop who, in his anxiety to convert a Parsee who was in London, said to him: "I cannot imagine how any man of intelligence, whose mind has been enlarged by travel and association with men of different opinions, can worship a created object like the sun." "O, my Lord Bishop," replied the fire-worshiper, who had not been fortunate in the weather since his arrival, "you should see it; you have no idea what a glorious orb it is." Yet a thoroughly Anglicized American like Henry James may pretend to find delight in the fog and smoke. Once, when spending August in London, he said, "There is no other pleasure in the world equal to that of a foggy day in the world's capital."

In foreign travel you will need all your wits,



for you are likely to get into scrapes and be tossed on the horns of unlooked-for dilemmas. In the most God-forsaken places you will find yourself attended by a preying band—not of the religious sort, but guides, couriers, tooters, thieves, and human vampires of various kinds—all bent on bleeding you. Said a tourist to a peasant one fine day: “Not much farming around here. How do the people live?” and the veracious Hodge brightly answered, “On the visitors.” Hartley Coleridge said Wordsworth was “a most unpleasant companion in a tour from his terrible fear of being cheated.” But we can hardly blame Wordsworth, for the tourist finds enough to keep such apprehensions rampant, and eternal vigilance is the price of his self-protection. You will learn that Denmark is not the only European country where “a man may smile and smile and be a villain.” Some day, when “every prospect pleases and only man is vile,” you will enter into the feelings which made Richter say, “There are men with regard to whom nothing could be more refreshing than to give them a sound drubbing.” Charles Dudley Warner, telling his experiences in trying to buy ancient coins of the Greeks, says: “I looked in the face of a handsome gray-beard, who asked me two thousand francs for a silver coin, which he said was a Solon, to see if there was any guile in his eye; but there was not. I cannot but hope that this race which has learned to look honest will some time become so.” A

Protestant affirms that in Italy ages of Jesuitry and imposture have made truth a myth and honesty a lost art. Victor Emmanuel I, King of Italy, said of himself, "I don't pretend to be wise, but I always keep my word." He was an utterly honest king, the best king in Europe in his day. One never understands what a rare treasure such a man was to Italy until he finds what a dearth there is of that sort of human stuff in that most lovely land. An English painter in Rome praises the beauty of a certain artist's model—a young girl—and then says, "Pascuccia was somewhat apt to leave truth at the bottom of her well and use fibs for everyday wear and tear; so it was not always necessary to believe her." Mr. Buscarlet, pastor of the Scotch Presbyterian Church in Naples, told us not to take a guide from our hotel for our day at Baiae and Puteoli, but to stop at the gate of Pozzuoli and inquire for Gennaro Rocco, of whom he said, enthusiastically: "Gennaro is a good fellow. Best guide around here. O, of course he'll cheat you if he can." Two men remember an old Jew, named Moses, who piloted them in the region of Nazareth, who spoke twelve languages and could lie with equal fluency in all of them. But then, even in America there are Ananias Clubs.

Your itemized bill at the hotel may often interest you. There are hotel keepers that know how to charge for the amount which the reflection of your face, if you are a hard-featured person, has

worn off the surface of the mirror. A visitor to Sicily writes that brigandage has ceased in that country, the brigands having gone into the hotel business, where they can plunder people legally and rake in more money with less risk. I heard once of a hotel where the rates were \$4.50 a day—board and lodging extra. An American gentleman says he found many hotels that were on the way to be first class—already so in their prices, and only needing to bring other things up to the rates.

When you travel abroad the custom of tipping and the almost universal expectation of backsheesh, trink-geld, pour-boire, buona-mano may trouble you not a little. A big Yankee from Maine paying his bill in a London restaurant was told that the sum did not include the waiter. "Wall," he roared, "I didn't eat any waiter, did I?" But he looked as if he would on slight provocation, so the restaurant man concluded not to continue the dispute. Mrs. Hope-Edwardes once complained to an Egyptian government official of high position as to a very superior person, "Everybody seems to want backsheesh." And the great man, extending his soft palm, gravely replied, "Certainly—I also." T. B. Aldrich said: "A man of ordinary agility might walk over the greater part of Europe on the outstretched palms of the lower classes." A fellow demanded four shillings of an elderly lady for showing her through one of the great churches. She remarked

that she had read of the nave of the cathedral, but never saw him before. In your travels you may occasionally get caught in a shakky vehicle that will threaten to do the "One-Hoss-Shay" trick, as did a carriage that was carrying a load of divinity from Athens to the Piræus one dark night; and you'll ride behind beasts that make you think of Mark Twain's Palestine horse which he called Baalbec because he was such a magnificent ruin. A literary gentleman who landed at Kingstown was beset by a throng of Irish jarvies, one of whom bid for his patronage with the statement that his horse was a poetic horse. The *littérateur* was captivated with the naïve wit of the fellow, and engaged him. He regretted it all the eight miles to Dublin, which it seemed he never would reach. When at last he was set down at his hotel, he asked his driver why he called that a poetic horse, and jarvie said, "Because, sor, his good points are rather imaginary than real."

When you travel abroad the customhouse examination of your baggage, as you pass from one country to another, may afford you much variegated enjoyment. No matter how abstemious and temperate you may be in your habits, your luggage will be persistently searched for tobacco and liquors. An officer has been known to turn a lady's trunk upside down and empty its entire contents on the floor. Mr. Whympers, the first conqueror of the Matterhorn, says the

customhouse is the purgatory of travelers. It is true his luggage was more than usually mysterious. He had a light ladder in sections, several coils of rope, an ice-ax, and other things of use in mountain-climbing. At the Italian frontier the officers refused to believe his explanation of these articles, and put their heads together over them to solve the mystery. Shortly the brightest fellow guessed it thus: Whympers must be a street performer—he climbed this ladder, balanced himself on the end of it, lighted his pipe, stuck a baton in the bowl, and made the baton gyrate around his head; this rope was to make a ring and keep the spectators back. “Monsieur is acrobat, then?” queried the chief officer. “Why, certainly,” said Whympers, impatient to get through on any terms. “Pass the luggage of monsieur, the acrobat.” At the French frontier not only his mountain outfit but every article in his portmanteau was scrutinized. Presently the officer came on something he had never seen before. “What is this?” he cries, holding up a half-worn tooth-brush. Then he seizes the accompanying box. “What is this?” “Tooth-powder.” “Ah, but it is forbidden to carry powder on the railway. It is dangerous!” Mr. Spurgeon, going from Nice to San Remo, was ordered by the officers at the Italian border to give up some choice fruit which he was carrying. The London preacher quietly retraced his steps across the border a half-dozen paces in French

territory, sat down by the wayside and ate the fruit, and then crossed the frontier untaxed, thus deducting the item from Italian imports and adding it to internal revenue in his own Department of the Interior. The traveling public sometimes suffer not a little bad treatment in the customhouse. A copy of the Methodist Review in a missionary's baggage was once detained under suspicion for thirty-six hours at the Turkish frontier, for fear it might contain incendiary matter. After examination the mysterious magazine was released as probably harmless, with the remark that it seemed to be something published for amusement! This incident shows the benighted condition of the Turkish empire.

When you travel abroad you may have some difficulty with foreign languages. Byron said, "Never go to France unless you know the lingo." A story is told of an American lady who at an inn in Normandy was deputed, as being the best French scholar in her party, to make the arrangements for their accommodation. She did her best, but the clerk could not catch her meaning, and his remarks were jargon to her. Finally, in desperation, she said slowly and with awful distinctness, "Do—you—speak—English?" "Wa'al, neow, you're jest a-talkin'," shouted the clerk. "Guess I'd orter speak English. I was raised ten miles from Bangor." The lone traveler wearies at times of hearing everybody around him—men, women, and little children—jabber-

ing in tongues he cannot understand, and after months on the Continent the very signboards in London seem like old friends to him; he is glad to read the signs of Waukenphast the shoemaker and Strongitharms the tailor. An untraveled Yorkshireman on his first day in France was perplexed at hearing nothing but unintelligible gibberish, and retired at night completely disgusted. Next morning he was wakened by the cock-crowing, and cried out with his first conscious breath, "Thank goodness, there's English at last." A little New York girl over in Germany, where nobody understood her talk, said, piously, "I'm so glad God is an American, so I can speak English to him." An English gentleman who was humiliated in Vienna on account of his poor French, by an Austrian lady who said, "How is it that your countrymen speak French so imperfectly? We Austrians use it as if it were our native tongue," took his revenge by retorting, "I really cannot say, madame, unless it be that the French Army have not been twice in our capital to teach it as they have in yours."

Many things beyond the seas say to the visitors, "This is the old Old World." Americans, who have not yet celebrated their second century, discover that a hundred years is but as a day in the history of some transatlantic lands. You no sooner sight Ireland than you see from the ship, perched along the coast of Munster, ruins nine hundred years old, of the towers and castles

of Brian Boruma, the warlike king from whom all the O'Briens derive their name. At the old haunted Alloway Kirk near Burns's home you notice that the stone steps are worn six inches deep by the feet of the generations. You venerate England when you look on her as ruling with increasing greatness her empire of a thousand years. You see the green snake slide into the ruins of Nero's palace and the she-wolf chained near by, and you think back to the founding of Rome nearly three thousand years ago, to the half-mythical time when Romulus drew his furrow at the foot of the Palatine Hill and marked the bounds of Roma quadrata. At Athens one looks on the rock-dwellings southwest of the Acropolis, and is told by Curtius that they are Pelasgic remains from prehistoric centuries. After tracing the mossy foot-prints of history, and wandering in the shadow of gray antiquities a few months, one realizes that the United States is but a raw and recent country, without any historic background to speak of. Whatever else our civilization is, it is not yet venerable.

The smoking habits of many parts of Europe are an astonishment and an annoyance to Americans. A tourist's notebook says two things are requisite in Holland—an oilcloth suit to protect one from being spattered by the everlasting scrubbing and splashing of the women, and a pocket-compass to steer through the tobacco smoke. The only place where a Spaniard does



not smoke is said to be in his coffin. On continental railways ladies especially are vexed to find that, whereas in America smokers are limited to a single car on a train, in Europe the reverse is customary, smoking being practiced everywhere on the train except in two or three cars out of a dozen. A sarcastic passenger, in a car where everybody but himself was smoking furiously, arose and said in his most courteous tones: "Beg pardon, gentlemen. I hope my not smoking doesn't inconvenience you." In May, 1909, Queen Alexandra and her daughter, the Princess Victoria, came ashore at Naples from the royal yacht in the harbor and lunched at Bertolini's Palace Hotel. The Queen of England and the Princess Victoria both concluded their luncheon by smoking cigarettes. Even in America as well as in Europe the tobacco-smoke nuisance increases, and nonsmokers have more and more difficulty in finding any place free from the brutal selfishness and outrageous insolence of smokers. In some hotels there is not even a dining-room kept free from tobacco smoke.

It would be base ingratitude not to confess that the traveler's natural desire to see wonderful curiosities is magnificently catered to by Europeans. Nowhere are such rare relics shown as in the Romish churches, among which there appears a jealous if not laudable rivalry in those matters. One cannot help admiring, for example, the enterprise of Cologne. There in a little old

chapel behind the cathedral choir they have the bones of the three Magi, which you are forbidden to doubt because the inscription assures you that they are all verily there—not one missing. But the Church of Saint Ursula leads on bones. In it they show you the bones of Stephen, the proto-martyr, with the skull of Saint Ursula. In fact, its interior looks more like a bona fide sepulcher than like a church, for it is literally walled with bones alleged to be those of eleven thousand virgins slaughtered by the Romans. They have also one of the water vessels which held the miraculous wine at the wedding of Cana. If those churches push their bold enterprise, they will in time be able to show us the remains of Balaam's ass, Cain's riding boots, feathers from the wing of Noah's dove, the jawbone that Samson used, Jehu's whiplash, and a long lock of Absalom's hair. There is really no reason why our curiosity to see these things should not be gratified when it can be done so easily. The untamed Yankee has been known to treat these Old World humbugs with disrespect. An Italian monk was showing a traveler a consecrated lamp which he said had never gone out during five centuries. The wild Westerner coolly gave the flame a puff and remarked with satisfaction, "Well, I guess it's out now."

While many things fill the sight-seer with wonder, some things disappoint him. You have heard of the "Blue Danube." Has not its blueness

been set to music in a song? But afloat on its bosom, you behold that the blue Danube is yellow; yes, yellow as the Jordan is where its clayey waters near the Dead Sea. What a mendacious world this is to be sure! Do they not tell us that Tell is a myth, and Homer not one man, but ten or twenty or an age of men? And Whately has his doubts about Napoleon Bonaparte. One is disgusted to find the Ilissus a river that he can jump across, the fountain of Callirhoe only one washbowlful of water, and the Danube looking like a mud-puddle in motion at the rate of five or ten miles an hour. Who was the blind man who called the Danube blue? Did he know what blue is? Had he ever been on the Mediterranean before he lost his sight? Did he know the hue of a star gentian where it contrasts with the near white snow? or the color of the arrowy Rhone where it shoots under the bridges at Geneva, as blue as Calvin's Calvinism?

The best rule as to guides is never to take one where you can do without, though they are sometimes so pertinacious that it is wellnigh impossible to shake them off. Their sole object is to rush you through the regular round as fast as possible, and they jabber incessantly in your ears so that you cannot think your own thoughts. We saw a Californian on the train from Florence to Pisa. As soon as he stepped on the platform at Pisa he was picked up by a professional who rushed him around without mercy. He had done

the cathedral, been up the Leaning Tower and down again, and was scudding off across the green lawn to the Baptistry before we had finished watching the swinging of Galileo's bronze lamp. We caught a glimpse of him again in Venice bolting around in the Ducal Palace, and rushing past the busts of Marco Polo, Dandolo, Paul Veronese, Galileo, and Dante, without giving them so much as a glance, while an unfortunate and exhausted young woman was panting along in his wake. Above all, never take a guide with you into a picture gallery. Think of trying to compose your soul to take in some masterpieces of art, with one of those fellows ding-ing in your ears and dragging you along. While one man sat for an hour before Titian's "Assump-tion" at Venice, six or eight generations of sight-seers came and went—entered at the door, were spun round on their heels by the guides, swept a wild staring glance along the wonderful picture-covered walls, and eddied out to be whirled about just so all day, and at night pay their guide his fifteen francs, sink dizzily with bewildered brains into their weary beds, with only such memories as a hummingtop might have when it stops spin-ning and falls over on its side. A fair sample of sight-seeing *à la mode* is seen in the remark of an American tourist, overheard by Mr. H. G. Wells near Christchurch gate near Canterbury: "Now, does this Marlowe monument really and truly matter? We've no time for sideshows and

second-rate stunts, Mamie. We want just the big, simple things of the place, just the broad, elemental Canterbury proposition. What is it saying to us? I want to get right hold of that, and then have tea in the very room that Chaucer did, and hustle to get that four-eighteen train back to London"—a remark rather more intelligent than the average.

Whatever countries are passed by, Switzerland and Italy should not be missed. One can have more delight in them than in any other part of Europe. They are small but full of wonders. Switzerland has the area of Maryland and the population of Ohio. It has more surface in proportion to its size than any other land in Europe. A large part of its surface is set up on edge and stacked a good ways into the sky. Italy is a peninsula reaching from Mont Blanc to Cape Spartivento, and from its ramparts of ice on the crest-line of the Alps to the capes that breast the warm Calabrian seas is eight hundred miles. In charms for the eye and the mind no land in Europe is so rich as Italy, and especially no other country has so much of picturesque and varied interest in its cities. Ruskin said, "Everybody's education should include the history of five European cities—Athens, Rome, Florence, Venice, London." Three of the five are in Italy. As a woman wears on her arm a bracelet of Roman mosaics and turns them round to show, stone by stone, the different designs, saying, "This, you see, is the Colosseum,

this is Titus's Arch, this Trajan's column, and these Pliny's doves," so Italy wears her cities; and on the face of each some one thing of distinction is inlaid as fit to be beheld in the beauty and lastingness of precious stones. Naples has its volcano and its wondrous bay bordered with loveliness and founded in fire; Bologna its seven-churches-in-one and its Saint Cecilia; Padua its metropolitan pile of San Antonio with seven domes and five towers, and Giotto's frescoed chapel; Verona the Gothic tombs of the Scaligers and its old amphitheater; Venice its Doges' Palace and the Bucentaur, emblems of her ancient glory; every town its own peculiar treasure.

Each place also casts upon the traveler the spell of some human memory like a spirit presence. As you might take a queen's necklace of cameos carved in pink and white and umber with the heads of gods and goddesses, and say, "Here is the head of Flora, here you see Minerva, this cameo keeps the features of Apollo, and this is Jove," just so you go the round of Italian cities, finding them linked together by golden bands of common pride, but each one cherishing and presenting its own favorite face, its household god of genius. Thus at Mantua you think of Virgil; at Ferrara of Ariosto, Guarini, and Tasso; at Verona of her great painter, Paul; at Padua of Catullus and Cornelius Nepos.

If one has any interest in the wonders of

antiquity, he must linger around the Pantheon and the Colosseum; one the most perfect pagan building remaining in Europe, the other the most majestic ruin on the face of the earth. The Pantheon, built by Marcus Agrippa, son-in-law of Augustus Cæsar, B. C. 27, was described with admiration eighteen centuries ago. Two friends in Rome lived near the Pantheon, and every day about sunset they spent an hour with it, caressing its old stones with eyes and hands. Once at high noon they saw the planet Venus in the sky through its open dome. It seemed like the old pagan goddess revisiting her ancient shrine, and one friend wrote an exquisite poem about it with a refrain like this: "The iron gates do shut men out; the gods have always open doors." The other called it a heathen poem, and the poet said, somewhat resentfully, with the air of one unjustly accused of heresy, that it wasn't pagan enough to do any harm. Here is a glimpse of the interior of the Pantheon from Hawthorne's *Marble Faun*: "Hilda now looked up into the dome. It was to her as if she beheld the worship of the priest and people ascending heavenward, purified from its alloy of earth. . . . She wondered if angels did not sometimes hover within the dome and show themselves, in brief glimpses, floating amid the sunshine and the glorified vapor." In the niches where the statues of the old gods were, seven altars were afterward reared for the sacraments

of the Christian faith. Raphael and Victor Emmanuel and Humbert are buried in the Pantheon. Standing in the center of the circular floor, you are directly under the twenty-eight-foot opening in the summit of the dome, through which the rain falls freely on your face as you look up at the scudding clouds. The tapping of your foot on the porphyry pavement rings in the paneled canopy sharp as the distant crack of a musket.

As for the Colosseum, what dreams a man may have when, climbing to its ragged highest wall and lying outstretched on its topmost stone, he overlooks the hills that propped the throne of Rome's huge empire, and in the sunny stillness hears the watchdog bay beyond the Tiber, while the hum of many a century of history murmurs in his mind, then turns and looks down within on the vast amphitheater, from whose massive seats one hundred thousand spectators at once could witness the bloody sports, sees a cross planted in the center of the arena where gladiators fought and Christians were butchered to make a Roman holiday! The ferocious revels, with their retinue of savage witnesses, are long gone into oblivion and the triumphant cross of Jesus has the peaceful place all to itself. That stupendous Flavian Amphitheater, finished by Titus on his return from the destruction of Jerusalem in the eightieth year of our era, stands the most imposing ruin in the world.



No one who cares for the masterpieces of architecture can fail to see what Italy has to show in Milan, Venice, Florence, and Rome. The marvel of Christian Rome is the basilica of Saint Peter's, the largest church ever built. It stands on the site of a temple of Jupiter Vaticanus. Constantine the Great reared a church there. The present structure was begun over four hundred years ago. The main building without the chapels cost fifty millions of dollars, and requires thirty thousand a year to keep it in repair. To meet the expense of its erection Pope Leo X resorted to the sale of indulgences, which roused the wrath of Luther and led to the Reformation. It is the most splendid edifice ever raised to the uses of religion.

Venice holds that exquisite pile, the Church of Saint Mark's, Mr. Ruskin's idol, which he could never speak of except with rapture. He called it "the most precious building in Europe standing yet in the eyes of men and the sunshine of heaven." He described it as "a sea-born vase of alabaster, full of incense of prayers; a purple manuscript—floor, walls, and roof blazoned with the scrolls of the gospel." He pictured it as "a jeweled casket and painted reliquary—chief of the treasures in the kingdoms of Christendom." England, he said, has nothing so venerable, for the shafts and stones of Saint Mark's were set on their foundations so long ago as when "Harold the Saxon stood by the grave of the Confessor

under the fresh-raised vaults of the first Norman Westminster Abbey, of which now only a single arch remains standing." The great basilica of Saint Mark's uplifts its sculptured front above the square, rich with Byzantine mosaic, marvelously delicate carvings, and no end of colors and columns. Over the portal stand the famous bronze horses with gilded hoofs and distended nostrils. Above, against the sky, the building breaks into a spray of fretwork with domes, spires, and crosses indescribable. There is no more poetic place than the Piazza of Saint Mark's at midnight, drenched with moonlight, forsaken of its crowd of chattering promenaders, the music ended, the bands gone, the cafés closed—all still save that the dreaming pigeons drop now and then a cooing murmur into the silence from shadowed cornices and gargoyles where they nestle. Straight and tall between you and the stars the slender campanile gleams like a shaft of frosted silver; but not a sound now falls from its slumbering family of lofty bells which at sunset shook down on the city a melodious canopy of sound. On this utter stillness the midnight strikes from the clock tower above the old gate way, where two bronze vulcans with ponderous sledges hammer the hour upon the brazen bell. There, by the marble margin of the Grand Canal, in what Lowell calls "Venice's moonlight of gold" shining on the column of the winged lion and the Doges' palace, behind which

in deep shadow is the Bridge of Sighs, one would not wonder to meet Antonio or Othello, the merchant or the Moor, Shylock or Bassanio, Portia or Desdemona.

Nearing Florence, Mr. Ruskin's third Italian city, you catch across the Tuscan valley the golden gleam of Brunelleschi's dome, of which Mrs. Browning writes, aloft in diamond air above the Arno; and you pay your reverence to Giotto's campanile, "that serene height of mountain alabaster, colored like a morning cloud and chased like a seashell," of which Robert Browning says:

Of all I saw and all I praised,  
The most to praise and the best to see  
Was the startling bell-tower Giotto raised.

But after seeing Rome, Venice, and Florence it remains a question whether Italy's most wondrous architectural treasure does not stand northwest in the middle of the Lombard plain; for in Milan is one superb unequaled pile, towering white and stately over the heart of the city, seeming to occupy all vision and appropriate the sky; roofed with a forest of pinnacles and turrets, thronged with hundreds of snowy statues like a flock of migrant angels settling to rest undefiled upon this stainless temple, or a regiment from the armies of heaven camped in holy bivouac in the blue tenting-field of the upper air. Milan's miraculous Duomo is "piled like a mountain and finished like a jewel—mass and minutiae alike matchless." Night and day I could not

keep from seeing it. No building ever so bewitched me. Its buttresses seemed to crowd into my room. It floated in the heavens above my bed, a celestial vision, all radiant in the dark, when I tried to go to sleep at night. It has been called the eighth wonder of the world.

When you visit foreign lands you will be amazed at the great variety of experiences that may be crowded into brief time. Within a few months one man paid Vienna-exhibition prices for dust, heat, and cholera—and received for nothing the hospitality of the monks at Alpine hospices; lounged in the glittering parlors of the Grand Hotel in Paris, and slept in a damp bed of musty moss on a wharf in the Zuyder Zee; lunched in the rain among the driftwood of the Dead Sea, the lowest water-level on the globe, and ate hasty omelette in the hut of the Matterjoch, the highest human habitation in Europe; roasted eggs by putting them in red-hot lava in the hissing crater of Vesuvius and breakfasted on a glacier near Monte Rosa, watching the sun come up from behind the Strahlhorn; sipped sherbets on the luxurious cushions of soft divans in Damascus, and drank milk at lone chalets in high Alpine pastures; lay flat on the top of Cheops the Great Pyramid, dreaming over the vision of Cairo, the Nile, the Sphinx, and the desert, and leaned over the icy crest of the Breithorn, nearly fourteen thousand feet high, looking down on the dazzling prospect of snow-

fields and around on an Alp-rimmed horizon; saw the tall aloes blooming below the Athenian Acropolis, and the Soldanella Alpina swinging its frail bluebell in the very snow at the southern base of Mont Blanc; the oleanders bright red and pink by the sea of Tiberias, and the edelweiss, white and velvety, on the almost inaccessible peaks of Switzerland.

When you travel abroad you will feel a new interest in geography. The dead old study that you learned to detest in schooldays begins to live as you journey through lands which before were but patches of color on a map. History too moves into the region of reality as you visit scenes where great events transpired, and live them out in imagination on the spot. For example, the battle of Solferino is fixed in memory when you have looked on the scene where it occurred, riding across the space of fifteen miles, where, from Lago di Garda on the north to the village of Solferino on the heights to southward, raged that obstinate fight in which the Italians, aided by the French, broke the grip of Austria and forced her to the peace of Villa Franca in 1859. Arnold of Rugby maintained that history and geography could be taught only in connection with each other; both can best be learned by travel. Goethe thought the Hydriote ship-owners gave their sons the best possible education by simply taking the boys around with them in their voyages to see and to learn. Nothing

so enriches and illuminates memory as travel, and it enlarges vastly the mental sky, in which, often at mention of a word, suggestions play like heat-lightning around the horizon of a summer night. In after life a thousand things will start up reminiscences like a flock of quails. A fig will make a traveler see Smyrna lying on its sloped crescent on Asia Minor's coast. Dates revive the vision of Damascus, green and well-watered on the desert's edge. Pour sweet-oil on your salad and the old olive trees shimmer their gray-green leaves in the sun, while it seems like the very essence of the yellow Orient itself that you are pouring, and forthwith the Mediterranean swings its shores through your memory. An orange can put one once more under the loaded boughs and in the scented shade of the orchards of Joppa. A small fig-banana carries me again through the Nile delta, and I see the naked brown herd-boys and hear the sakias creak as they slowly lift water from the river to the trenches to irrigate the plain. The smell of grapes is enough to anchor me off Chios, where the balmy air is spicy and fruity with odors from steep vineyard slopes along which the potent sunshine of summer days is stored up in tiny wineskins that hang in clusters of purple and gold, and where the sea is rippled with fragrant winds that whisper together like lovers loitering by rose-bannered garden walls. It was T. B. Aldrich, was it not? who said: "See here,

three flowers pressed in one book. This white daisy I plucked one June on Keats's grave in Rome, in the shadow of the pyramid of Caius Cestius. This blue bell-gentian I found one July day blooming heroically through the edge of the snow on the Col de Seigne, in the high Italian Alps. This scarlet poppy I gathered one blue-and-gold April in the green valley of Eshcol in sight of the towers of Hebron and Abraham's oak at Mamre."

When you have traveled beyond seas you may come home with some respectable reasons for loving your own country more than ever. You will come, let us hope, with some fuller knowledge of the contents of other lands (not to mention veracity) than had the lady to whom Dr. Beadle, of Philadelphia, spoke of the beauty of the Dardanelles, and who responded: "O, yes! I know them well. They are intimate friends of ours. We met them in Paris."

And when at last from the steamer's deck your eyes see again the stars and stripes flying in the sea-wind above the Highlands of Navesink, you may be forgiven if you say within yourself with a thankful heart, "There is the best land under heaven and the finest flag that floats!"—a sentiment not unshared, it would seem, by the rest of the world; else why do so many millions, born in other countries, forsake their native lands for ours?

## VAGABONDIA

All men go to Arcady—  
Dear, dream-haunted Arcady:  
Soon or late, they breathe its air,  
Learn its language, pray its prayer,  
Linger there till dreams are done.

VAGABONDIA is an unmapped region, never caught in the net of latitude and longitude, lying between here and Arcadia, bordering Bohemia on one side and Philistia on the other—though without boundary lines, for the god Terminus never visited that land, where, in fact, the worship of any Divinity of Order is prohibited by law. Its most settled population consists of people who are like gypsies, of whom

Somebody says they have come from the moon,  
Seen with their eyes Eldorado,  
Sat in the Bo-tree's shadow,  
Wandered at noon  
In the valleys of Van,  
Tented in Lebanon, tarried in Ophir,  
Last year in Tartary piped for the Khan.

A wild desire to visit Vagabondia—a fever of unrest which the Germans name *wanderlust*—sometimes seizes even reputable earthlings. What the tourists through that region are not is easier to say than what they are. They are not, for example, logicians, for sweet unreason is their only rationale. They are not moralists,



for their sense of responsibility frequently abandons them and goes straying off by the road of By-and-By which leads to the town of Never. They are not mathematicians, for their path has no equation, their curves would give geometry the vertigo, and they are gyrating through a region where two plus two cannot be depended on to make four, where asymptotes shun the curves with unconcealed aversion, and tangents coldly refuse to kiss the circle. Yet very respectable persons are reported to have been seen in Vagabondia, though in such strange disguise that no observer would suspect that, when housed at home in the serious and sedulous service of life, they are men of many dignities and degrees—possibly bishops, jurists, purists, sages, or saints. The region here spoken of is not the abode of professional idlers or other worthless persons. On its roadhouse registers one does not find the name of dapper and dainty Sir Ringlets, who dotes on his wardrobe, and lives on to-morrow's labor and overdraws his account, but the autographs of brainy and strenuous toilers vacationing with wild Nature, indulging, for the nonce, like the Howadji in Syria, in "that fair forgetfulness of yesterday and to-morrow which is the golden garland of to-day"; men who, from anti-septic sunbaths and copious draughts of mountain oxygen, are getting red blood, steady nerves, rude health, wild appetite, rampant, vehement, resonant power, with which to serve Him who

said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"; men who have broken away from indoor duties and desk-bound tasks, and, with an envious thought of Nebuchadnezzar, said:

I will go out to grass with that old King,  
For I am weary of clothes and cooks.  
I long to lie along the banks of brooks,  
And watch the boughs above me sway and swing.

Let me taste the old immortal  
Indolence of life once more;  
Not recalling nor foreseeing,  
Let the great slow joys of being  
Well my heart through as of yore;—

men who suddenly remember in the midst of their work that the Lord of the world keeps open house out-of-doors for

The vagabondish sons of God  
Who know the byways and the flowers;  
Who idle down the traffic lands,  
And loiter through the woods with Spring;  
To whom the glory of the earth  
Is but to hear a bluebird sing.

From two American poets came, in 1894, "Songs from Vagabondia," bound in light lavender boards and running to five editions; in 1896, "More Songs," bound in ecru, the color of a yellow-ripe wheat field, selling three editions; and in 1900, "Last Songs," in dark-brown cover like sere November oak leaves, of which last book The Nation said, it "closes the rather prolonged period of juvenility in its authors," the

successive booklets symbolizing by their sombering covers the shading seasons of advancing life. The singers of these songs from Vagabondia are Richard Hovey and Bliss Carman—the latter of whom must have most credit for them—each of whom separately published six other volumes of verse, while conjointly they issue these three thin little books, in the first and last of which the authorship of each poem is indicated by the initials attached, whereas in “More Songs” the higher critics are left to guess out the author of each piece by applying their keen intuitions to its internal evidences. The differences in style, point of view, degree of culture, and type of mind in the poems of the ecru book would force the critics to assume at least a dozen collaborators in order to account for the work of these two men. One higher-critical guess which we will venture is that it is Bliss Carman, who sings over “A copy of Browning” seventeen verses, of which these are the last:

Through all the seasons,  
You gave us reasons  
For splendid treasons  
To doubt and fear;  
Bade no foot falter,  
Though weaklings palter,  
And friendships alter  
From year to year.

Since first I sought you,  
Found you and bought you,  
Hugged you and brought you  
Home from Cornhill;

While some upbraid you,  
And some parade you,  
Nine years have made you  
My master still.

We venture again that it is the same ecstatic  
vagrant who sings "A Vagabond Song":

There is something in the autumn that is native to my  
blood—  
Touch of manner, hint of mood;  
And my heart is like a rhyme,  
With the yellow and the purple and the crimson keeping  
time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like the cry  
Of bugles going by;  
And my lonely spirit thrills  
To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood astir;  
We must rise and follow her,  
When from every hill of flame  
She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

And we will forever resign all claim to higher-  
critical instinct if it is not the soul of Bliss Car-  
man which was stirred to this rapture:

Over the shoulders and slopes of the dune  
I saw the white daisies go down to the sea,  
A host in the sunshine, an army in June,  
The people God sends us to set our hearts free.

The bobolinks rallied them up from the dell,  
The orioles whistled them out of the wood;  
And all of their singing was, "Earth, it is well!"  
And all of their dancing was, "Life, thou art good!"

Nor is there any difficulty in telling who wrote  
"In the Workshop," in which we see the Maker  
at work fashioning men. He made one with a

loyal heart; and that was a lover. He made another with a roving eye; and that was a vagrant. He made a third with a loyal heart *and* a roving eye, mixture of lover and vagrant; and that was a poet—whom, we conjecture, the Maker named Bliss Carman, the true laureate of Vagabondia, the bard of odd fancy, racy nature, sportive spirit, original mind, gypsy heart, and daring expression.

These tramping troubadours, Hovey and Carman, are two frank, hearty fellows, who have faced all weathers, and the cheer of whose gay comradeship rings in Hovey's "Song at the Crossroads."

With a steady swing and open brows  
We have tramped the ways together;  
We have met our loss with a smile and a song,  
And our gains with a wink and a whistle.

They are men of the vision and the dream, and also of eager strong endeavor. To imagine, aspire, and realize is life's processional for them. Roaming the world by its most enchanting ways, their hearth the earth, their roof the azure dome, they cherish the high, wholesome, and stimulating faith that "it is better farther on," and seek to hit the happy trail and find a road to Arcady. Their visionary yet urgent aspiration is sustained even in their last poem, "The Adventurers," written by the two together, in which they describe, it would seem, themselves as soldiers of fortune, flying no man's flag, but beating the

drum at the crossroads to summon all who will march to "conquer the golden hill-lands of Desire, the Nicaraguas of the soul."

These three blithe, buoyant books of *wanderlied*, with their hundred and thirty-eight poems, persuade us that Vagabondia is as full of song as the summer woods is of bird-warble at four o'clock in the morning; and in their pages almost every mood has voice except the sickly, the sagging, and the plaintive. Their contents range from landscape balladry and recursions of Arthurian romance to rollicking roundelays, the mischief-play of "The Skeptics," such froward reactions of a truant temper as the grewsome "Hearse-horse" and "Night-washers," and "A Grotesque" which makes us easily believe these poets when they say, "Our Gothic minds have gargoyles' fancies."

No common vagrants these, but the Knights Templars of the rover-breed, claiming as brothers of their blood that gallant prince of valiant vagabonds, Louis Stevenson, wayfaring round the world from Saranac to Samoa, and, as well, the man who wrote "The Jungle Books," "Captains Courageous," and "The Seven Seas," and who rummages America, Europe, Asia, and Africa to distill the juice of continents and report the gist of peoples, and who is preëminently the poet of migrants and pioneers. In "Hem and Haw" there is a strenuous irony which reminds one of the author of "The Day's Work":

Hem and Haw were the sons of sin,  
Created to shally and shirk;  
Hem lay 'round and Haw looked on  
While God did all the work.

Hem was a foggy, and Haw was a prig,  
For both had the dull, dull mind;  
And whenever they had a thing to do  
They yammered and went it blind.

Hem was the father of bigots and bores;  
As the sands of the sea were they.  
And Haw was the father of all the tribe  
Who criticise to-day.

But God was an artist from the first,  
And knew what he was about;  
While over his shoulder sneered these two,  
And advised him to rub it out.

They prophesied ruin ere man was made:  
"Such folly must surely fall!"  
And when he was done, "Do you think, my Lord,  
He's better without a tail?"

And still in the honest working world,  
With posture, and hint, and smirk,  
These sons of the devil are standing by  
While Man does all the work.

They balk endeavor and baffle reform,  
In the sacred name of law;  
And over the quavering voice of Hem  
Is the droning voice of Haw.

These poets, like many others, demur to the creeds, yet most of the demurrers have a little private creed of their own, which they wear secretly under their garments as a sort of support, shaped and adjusted to the contour of their

special abnormality. They will not let anybody prescribe a body of thought or form of expression for them; they themselves are original thinkers and inventors of new forms. The vagabond announcement is that truth is not a creed nor an ology, that priests and savants do not know what it is, that the artistic mind alone can tell what is truth. So thinks the artistic mind, and proceeds to say sagely, comprehensively, enlighteningly, that truth is not a part, but the beautiful, symmetric whole. So now we all know, thanks to the artistic mind, and Pilate and the rest of us need not trouble the Master any more with the old question, "What is truth?" This glorification of the artistic mind is frequent in poets and their kin; not in all of them, however. Some have recognized and deferred to a more august and imperative Authority than the æsthetic sense or the artistic mind. One named Milton did, another known as Dante, one surnamed Shakespeare, and others called Browning and Tennyson. But if any particular creed does not fit a man, he is not bound to wear it. Let none be excommunicated because he professes not to have exhaustively explored, analyzed, and tabulated all the contents of the universe, nor solved all the riddles of the mysterious and paradoxical human soul, which is as closed and deep and secret as a well, yet as open and exposed as a hilltop. When the adventuring vagabonds cry, "O for the trail, wherever it may



lead, from small credulity to larger creed!" we say "Amen!" but we doubt if the artistic mind is the world's great and sufficient Teacher. Phillips Brooks, in his Bohlen Lectures on "The Influence of Jesus," wrote that one great impression of the life of Jesus must always be of "the subordinate importance of those things in which only the æsthetic nature finds its pleasure. There is no condemnation of these things in that wise, deep life. But the fact must ever remain that the wisest, deepest life that ever lived left them on one side, was satisfied without them."

Although the songs of these strolling musicians are of the open road and not of the sanctuary, yet often they move to a lift of aspiration and a lilt of faith which seem not unregenerate. "At the End of the Day" has this brave manful shout:

Now shame on the craven truckler  
And the puling things that mope!  
We've a rapture for our buckler  
And a heart that swells with hope.  
Give a cheer!  
For the soul shall not give way.  
Here's to the greater to-morrow  
That is born of a great to-day!

Even on the open road a vagabond may trace the footprints of a Providence, as once two men footing it to Emmaus had a burning sense of a divine Presence walking with them. And a poet may come home from Vagabondia, the region of the disorderly, the haphazard, and the incalculable.

lable, settled in the conclusion that there is no such thing as accident:

Accident

Itself unmasks the likeness of Intent,  
And ever in blind chance's darkest crypt  
The shrine lamp of God's purposing is found.

Two men shall be grinding together at the same poetic mill, and the one shall be taken and the other left. "Last Songs" has the pathos of finality, for Richard Hovey passed out of sight beyond earth's horizon, bound on the long trail of the insatiate heart and the great expectation, and left Bliss Carman's jubilant voice sinking to subdued and tender tones:

My great friend and I were happy and free,  
And I will remember his beautiful words and ways  
For the rest of my days.

How eager he was for truth!  
Yet never scorned the good things of his youth,  
The soul of gentleness and the soul of love!

The spirit of Hovey's life may be learned from his own words. He taught the wisdom of accepting each day on its own terms as a good gift from God:

Life as it is! Accept it; it is thine!  
The God that gave it gave it for thy good;  
The God that made it had not been divine  
Could he have set thee poison for thy food.

How his soul shook with a sense of the Divine on the high places of the earth is told in his lines, "From the Cliff":

I feel a mighty wind upon me blow  
Like God's breath kindling in my soul a birth  
Of turbulent music struggling to break girth.  
I pass with Dante through eternal woe,  
Quiver with Sappho's passion at my heart,  
See Pindar's chariots flashing past the goal,  
Triumph o'er splendors of unutterable light  
And know supremely this, O God—thou art;  
Feeling in all the tumult of my soul  
Grand kinship with the glory of thy might.

The decalogue which Hovey promised himself to live by has these commandments: "To love everybody a little and some people a great deal; to trust that the God who made us is good and will not forget us; to obey them who have the right to hold themselves responsible for us; to look on the bright side of things and keep a good heart up; to dare to do whatever we think we ought to do; to express our good, happy feelings and not the others; to use our intelligence to avoid trouble: not to hate anyone, nor hurt them except for a greater good; not to be mean, nor selfish, nor unjust; not to tell lies, except when people ask what they have no right to know; not to do anything dirty, or ugly, or intemperate." On the second page of the dark-brown oak-leaf book of "Songs" is Richard Hovey's greeting to death:

I did not fear thee, Death, nor then nor now.  
I girded up my loins and sought my kind,  
And did a man's work in a world of men,  
And looked upon my work and called it good.  
Now come! I give thee welcome!

Bliss Carman, left to tramp alone the ways of Vagabondia, may sing of his lost comrade, as once he sang of Gleeson White in "Non omnis Moriar":

There is a part of me that knows,  
Beneath incertitude and fear,  
I shall not perish when I pass  
Beyond mortality's frontier.  
In patience, therefore, I await  
My friend's unchanged, benign regard—  
Some April when I too shall be  
Splilt water from a broken shard.

No more than these two vagabonds are the most quiet and settled of mortals anything but pilgrims and strangers here; for he

Whose furthest footsteps never strayed  
Beyond the village of his birth,  
Is but a lodger for the night  
In this old wayside inn of earth.

To-morrow he shall take his pack  
And set out for the ways beyond,  
On the old trail from star to star,  
An alien and a vagabond.

That is the forlorn and lonely *finale* for all of us, unless yonder, worlds away, in the heaven's height far and steep, the starry trail leads to the Father's house and the Beatific Vision and a life forever with the Lord, as He declared who brought immortality to light, and said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

## AN IDYLL OF IDLENESS

When a man's busy, why, leisure  
Strikes him as wonderful pleasure;  
Faith, and at leisure once is he?  
Straightway he wants to be busy.

THIS accounts for the propensity of persons who, like Karshish, the Arab physician, have "an itch, a sting to write," to cram the editor's waste basket with summer letters. Exasperating enough is the vapid volubility of these loquacious loiterers to the harnessed editor who must spend his leisure hours in catching up with his work. The editor knows, but will not tell, how many summer loungers, as if to keep up the hallucination of their own usefulness, having nothing else to do, sit down to discourse about the profit of doing nothing. A sarcastic and envious editor, ill tempered with overwork, remarks that "summer is the season when the man who was born tired makes the most of his pedigree." But the loungeer who scribbles vacation letters cannot be one of the "Knights of Lethargy," or he would not have energy to write. Moreover, if the idler finds his rest so delicious that he must tell somebody about it, this is proof positive that he belongs to the laboring classes, for it is only the worked-out man that tastes with keen and grateful relish the sweetness of temporary irresponsibility and "day-long blessed idleness."

John Tyndall, loitering amid the beauties of a Swiss valley, filled with a deep pleasure, says: "Had I not been a worker previous to my release from London, I could not now be so glad an idler." That prodigious toiler, Mr. Spurgeon, wrote in the preface to "Memories of Stambourne," his last book: "I am one of those who cannot rest unless they have something to do." He is dead prematurely of enormous overwork. No ardent laborer need be ashamed of resting. There is medical advice for it in the words of the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table": "Work like a man, but don't be worked to death."

The bliss and benefit of utter rest is manifold. That inspired observer, John Ruskin, literary high priest of the beautiful for the present and many subsequent generations, tells us that his most successful observations have been made while lying all his length on the softest grass he could find, and that in the process of very profound observation, if it be afternoon, he usually goes to sleep. What daydreams might float through such a brain along the delicious borders of such slumber, the mind amphibious and oscillant between waking and dozing! Robust, energetic Charles Kingsley said sleep was his favorite amusement. With what abounding vigor he leaped to his feet after its full recreation! How dewy fresh the mind often is after sound sleep in sun-dried, breeze-cooled air! A shrewd Yankee who sold health-lifts told a

clergyman that the best time for rhetorical mental composition was in the morning, between the moment of waking and the time of getting up. Many a sermon or other subject has been clear and connected on waking that was an unmanageable and hopeless muddle at late bedtime. Such clarifying and solving power is in wholesome and sufficient sleep. Robert Browning once answered a friend who inquired the secret of his solid health, "I sleep; sleep is the great doctor, young man." Wesley, at the age of eighty, gave one reason of his comfortable condition and sustained vigor of body and mind, "Sleeping night or day, whenever I want it." One of the most productive and lucid minds among the metropolitan toilers of to-day, editor of a weekly paper of the first order, the minister of a famous great church, preacher to universities, lecturer before institutes, author of books, being asked whether he took much physical exercise to keep himself in working order, replied, "No, but I sleep a good deal." He is of a thin and wiry make; a narrow head three stories high and mansard roof; forehead "embossed with protuberant organs of the intellectual faculties."

One of the pests and perils of a bookish man's vacation is books. He finds it hard to let them alone. That dissolute genius, Charles James Fox, was of opinion that there is only one thing pleasanter than lying in the grass under the trees with a book, and that is to lie there without

a book. This braves the odium of being at variance with the maxim, "*Otium sine literis mors est*," but harmonizes with Walt Whitman: "I lie abstracted and hear beautiful tales of things, and the reasons of things. They are so beautiful I nudge myself to listen." E. R. Sill took Shakespeare in his pocket once when he went sauntering across a summer landscape, and found he had no use for it:

For the vivid beauty makes a book absurd;  
What beside the real world is the written word?  
Keep the page till winter, when no thrush is heard!

Why read Hamlet here? What's Hecuba to me?  
Let me read the grain field; let me read the tree;  
Let me read my own heart, deep as I can see.

Bismarck, driven like a pack horse under cares of state, once wrote to his sister: "The restlessness of my existence is unbearable. I long for the country and the woods and nothing to do." The ministry of nature to man's physical and mental well-being in hours of leisurely communion is sanative and soothing, to the devout spirit even spiritualizing, for the visible universe is but a thin screen through which the presence and glory of the Maker shine. The "wilderness cure" has saved many. The real "wine of the woods" surpasses the nostrum of that name. An old-fashioned authority says, "Nothin' like green grass and woodsy smells to right folks up when they are low in sperrits or fretted and riled in temper."



Mr. Wesley was ill in 1753. We read that "he repeatedly caught cold, and was threatened with a rapid consumption." Dr. Fothergill told him that he "must not stay in town one day longer; that if anything would do him good, it must be country air, rest, asses' milk, and daily riding." He obeyed at once, but, desiring to have all things in readiness in case the end were near, he wrote this epitaph for his tombstone:

## HERE LIETH

THE BODY OF JOHN WESLEY,

A brand plucked out of the burning;

Who died of consumption in the 51st year of his age;

Not leaving after his debts are paid ten pounds be-  
hind him;

Praying,

God be merciful to me, an unprofitable servant.

But he did not die. Country air and rest restored him, and at his death, thirty-six years later, a very different inscription was placed on his monument.

In 1853 Dr. S. Irenæus Prime, broken down by overwork, went abroad. He was carried from his bed to the dock, where they laid him down on three barrel heads till the tug came to take him to the ship, which lay off in the stream. A sea voyage, change, and relief from care and work recovered his health, so that he returned in vigor to edit the Observer thirty years longer.

Thomas Coke read on shipboard the "Pastorals" of Virgil, because they conveyed him "by

a kind of magic power to fields and groves and purling brooks."

A New York banker, leaning from the bridge over a Green Mountain stream, said: "I would rather hear the gurgling of a brook than Gilmore's band. When I am ailing or troubled at home, unable for business, I love to imagine country scenes and trout brooks that I have fished in. I find thoughts of them 'diverting and refreshing."

Wordsworth had a passion for wandering, which, he said, might have made him in other circumstances a peddler. Long and solitary walks by the seaside were the favorite recreation of Adam Smith, author of "The Wealth of Nations," after studying hard at Kirkcaldy.

Webster, in his eulogy of Calhoun, said, "He had no recreations, and never seemed to feel the need of amusements." This the great nullificationist could not have said of the farmer-statesman of Marshfield, for an illustrated life of Webster to be complete should not more certainly contain a picture of him annihilating his antagonist in the Senate chamber than one showing him in rough dress and cowhide boots luxuriating in his chosen recreation of fishing. He would sit on a log and fish all day, musing mildly on affairs of state, and in a kind of semiconscious cerebration framing great sentences for no occasion in particular, one of which waited fifteen years before finding for itself a place and pub-

licity. Many a loaf of thought he kneaded in that piscatorial tranquillity of mind, in which from sun and wind, silence and solitude and repose, a gentle stimulus worked like a morsel of yeast. Supplies often arrive indirectly and surreptitiously. A half-day at one's desk in mental sweat and strenuous thinking to a point may have less result than an hour when one pretends to be fishing, doing nothing apparently but contemplate the end of his rod. One may fix his meditative gaze on his pole-tip and have "all creation" pass before his mind's eye. You often see a thing best by looking at something else. Through a telescope you may sometimes get the distinctive sight of a star by looking a little to one side of it. Also oftentimes one works best by resting. It has happened that the most fruitful as well as most restful part of a man's year was his vacation. The busy man's idleness is more productive than a lazy man's work.

Life out-of-doors, in communion with the glowing, tuneful, bloomy, sportive, and happy world, may even have the effect to console grief, buoy despondent spirits, and make a sunny faith more possible. One day long ago Celia Thaxter sat on the Isles of Shoals in a somber mood, weary and "sad with change and loss," pondering life's strange problems, the enigma of herself, and the sure coming on of death. Just then the blithe song sparrow struck up his rapturous rippling tune and sang as if his little heart would burst for

joy; and as that bonny music thrilled and warbled on from out the tiny throat, it broke up the troubled tenor of her thoughts and filled her soul with comfort, so that she said:

“God never meant to mock us with that voice!  
That is the keynote of the universe;  
That song of perfect trust, of perfect cheer,  
Courageous, constant, free of doubt or fear.”

So she wrote many a year ago, and when on a July day a certain visitor set foot on Appledore, the first sound heard was laughter—merry, strong, and sweet—ringing from the lips of a woman with white hair and ruddy cheeks well bronzed, the same woman who listened to the song sparrow until she held it “sinful to despond,” and who kept so well the cheery lesson that the rocks and waves about this cluster of bleak islets still listened to her happy laughter in years when youth and middle age lay far behind her.

## EMERSON IN THE ADIRONDACKS

IN the flood of reminiscences and characterizations attending the Emerson centennial we saw no reference to the light thrown on the Sage of Concord by W. J. Stillman, who made a study of him at close quarters in the heart of the great wilderness. In the early days when the North Woods were little known and less frequented a party of friends called "The Adirondack Club" spent several seasons in camp on Follansbee Pond. The company included Emerson, Agassiz, Dr. Howe, Professor Wyman, Judge Hoar, Horatio Woodman, and Dr. Binney. Longfellow was invited to join the party, but refused when he learned that Emerson intended taking a gun, for, he said, "Somebody will be shot." Stillman thinks, however, that Longfellow's want of sympathy with Emerson was the subliminal cause of this decision. Living together night and day in the woods for long weeks, in such constant intimacy and self-revelation as only the solitude provides, Stillman had extraordinary opportunity for studying Emerson's personality *en deshabille*, sensing his quality, and overhearing even the soliloquies of his soul. The characterizations given us by this brilliant journalist and artist have therefore a high and authoritative value by reason of their keen in-

sight and skillful drawing. Stillman tells us that for him the dominant interest and rarest privilege of those weeks in the wilderness was the study of Emerson. Some of his impressions transcribed here will add somewhat to the fullness of the Emerson celebration.

Emerson was too serene ever to be discourteous, and was capable of the hottest antagonism without rudeness, and the most intense indignation without quickening his speech or raising his tone; grasping and exhausting with imaginative activity whatever object furnished him with matter for thought, and throwing to the rubbish heap whatever was superficial; indifferent to form or polish if only he could find a diamond; reveling in mystery, and with eyes that penetrated like the X-ray through all concealing obscurities and found at the bottom of them what was there to find; inflexible in his devotion to truth and indifferent to artificial conditions of men or things. Nothing but the roots of things, their inmost anatomy, attracted him; he brushed away contemptuously the beauties on which Longfellow spent much tenderness, and threw aside like an empty nutshell the form on which an artist would have bestowed his devotion. One who was well acquainted with both men could see that there was little in common between Emerson and Longfellow except culture.

The candor, sincerity, and childlike simplicity of Emerson made him a charming object of study to Stillman, who says:

The crystalline limpidity of his character, free from all conventions, prejudices, or personal color, facilitated the study of the man. So far as my experience goes he was unique, not so much from intellectual power—for I do not accept his as the mind of greatest caliber among the men I have known—but from his absolute transparency of nature, perfect receptivity, and utter devotion to the truth. In the days of martyrdom Emerson would have gone to the

stake smiling and undismayed, though questioning all the time, even as to the nature of his emotions. It was this serene impassiveness which gave the common impression of his coldness—an impression which even Longfellow shared. But he was not cold nor disposed to make of his friends mere subjects of analysis; he was an eager student of men as of nature, but superficial men he tired of and dropped. It was the serenity and almost impersonality of his friendship which made it seem frigid to those whose temperament was widely different. He was not without strong feelings; wrong, injustice, cruelty to man or beast roused his indignation; though the quiet warmth of his affection was like the mild sun of May. . . . Emerson was the best listener I ever knew, never manifesting that greedy and tyrannical propensity which seeks to monopolize the conversation, overriding and silencing others. At the Saturday Club in Boston his gentle attention to what others were saying far exceeded his disposition to enter into the discussions, though now and then he flashed out with a comment which lit up the subject as an electric spark might. I remember one day, when the club was discussing the nature of genius, some one turned to Emerson and asked him for a definition of the thing, and he instantly replied, "The faculty of generalizing from a single example"; and nobody at the table could give so good and concise a definition. There is a portrait of him by Rowse, who knew and loved him well, which renders this side of Emerson in a way that makes it the most remarkable picture I know—the listening Emerson. . . . Of all the experiences of my past life nothing else survives with the vividness of my summers with Emerson in the Adirondacks. As I look back across many years to the days when we questioned and discussed together on the lake or in the woods, he rises above all his contemporaries like Mont Blanc above surrounding peaks. As I remember him in the forest, claiming kinship with great nature and her Maker, he seems to me the typical American, the noblest of all the race in his idealization of the American. Lowell was of a more cosmopolitan type, of a wider range of sympathies and affections, accepted and bestowed, and to

me a friend loved as Jonathan loved David; but as a unique, idealized individuality Emerson looms up in those Arcadian days more and more as the dominant personality, the supreme figure. It is by character, and not by accomplishment or education, that this fine, crystalline, clear-faceted mind, this keen thinker and seer, more than holds his own in all comparisons with his contemporaries and comrades. I loved Lowell more, and Agassiz, but America will have many like Lowell and Agassiz before Emerson's peer is seen. Attainments and discoveries and accomplishments will surpass themselves as years go on, but to *be* as Emerson *was* is something complete, supreme, absolute.

When the rest of the Adirondack Club, compelled by an empty larder, went out with the dogs to drive deer, Emerson would go off to some secluded place on the lake or in the woods to meditate. Though he brought a gun with him from home, chiefly because the others did, he never killed anything. He actually practiced the self-restraint which he commends in his verse entitled "Forbearance":

Hast thou named all the birds without a gun? ·  
Loved the wood-rose and left it on its stem?  
At rich men's tables eaten bread and pulse?  
Unarmed, faced danger with a heart of trust?  
And loved so well a high behavior  
In man or maid, that thou from speech refrained,  
Nobility more nobly to repay?  
O, be my friend and teach me to be thine!

The habitual attitude of Emerson toward all nature was called into expression when some one spoke of the Rhodora and asked him whence it came. It is the most exquisite piece of sweet modesty and tender deference in literature.



Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why  
Thy charm is wasted on the earth and sky,  
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,  
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being.  
Why thou went there, O rival of the rose!  
I never thought to ask, I never knew;  
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose  
The selfsame Power that brought me there brought you.

Stillman painted a sketch of that camp by Folsansbee Water with its inhabitants, dividing the party after the habit of its usual morning occupations. Lowell, Hoar, Binney, Woodman, and Stillman are practicing firing at a target to improve their marksmanship; Agassiz and Wyman are dissecting a fish on a tree stump; but Emerson, being neither marksman nor scientist, stands between the two groups, watching both. Yet he learned more than they all. While they were dealing with the sensible, the superficial, and material, he always seemed most sensitive to the invisible, looking through phenomena to Something behind them. Yet he was not unaware of things around him. His sensitiveness to the world shows in many lines like these:

As I spoke, beneath my feet  
The ground-pine curled its pretty wreath,  
Running over the club-moss burrs;  
I inhaled the violet's breath;  
Around me stood the oaks and firs;  
Pine-cones and acorns lay on the ground;  
Over me soared the eternal sky,  
Full of light and of deity;  
Beauty through my senses stole;  
I yielded myself to the perfect whole.

Emerson was insatiable in his study of human nature, and the guides in the Adirondacks—rude backwoodsmen, rough and illiterate, but with many of their faculties at the maximum of acuteness, their senses as keen and alert as those of wild animals, and wise in forest lore—were to him extremely fascinating. He watched their every action, and scrutinized their ideas as if he had verily come upon the primitive, aboriginal man. These men of the woods, however, were not half as much interested in Emerson, nor in any other member of the camping party, as they were in Louis Agassiz. To them the party was known as “Agassiz and his friends,” and they were all on the *qui vive* to see the great scientist who had refused, not long before, an offer from the emperor of the French of the keepership of the Jardin des Plantes and a senatorship for life if he would come to Paris and live there. No political or literary dignity could equal this, and a deputation of the natives was appointed to meet “Agassiz and his friends” and welcome them to the region. The distinguished party were accordingly met, at the point where they would enter the wilderness, by the deputation. The head of the welcoming committee, being suspicious of civilized and urban mankind, shrewdly provided himself beforehand with an engraved portrait of the great Switzer, to guard against being imposed on by any rascally impersonator. Having looked Agassiz over and carefully com-

pared him with the engraving, he gravely remarked to his followers, "Yes, that's him, boys." The deputation then proceeded solemnly one by one to shake hands with the great scientist, taking no notice whatever of the other illustrious members of the famous Adirondack Club, who filed meekly away into the wilderness distinctly notified of their insignificance.

## BESIDE THE SEA

FOR inlanders to be going to the shore is almost the blithest and breeziest of anticipations; and when at the end of a hot day's dusty travel one snuffs salt meadows from the car windows, and feels his hair lifted, face cooled, and lungs filled by the good sea breeze, it is enough to make a pelagian, though not a heretic, out of the most orthodox. The newcomer feels at once a physical blessing subtly diffused through his frame, as if nature had pronounced over him her most potent benediction, and soon finds that the sea air is a drowsy syrup which drugs his jaded nerves and senses into a life-saving stupor. He drinks sleep like nectar all night long, and scarce wakes up by day, but rests with his body in a kind of lethargic swoon, and his mind too deliciously indolent to do more than sit in its easy chair and rock. Then after days and nights of abysmal repose, wherein he was sunk like a drowned man in the sea, he rises to the surface of full consciousness again, and swims ashore to the definite and firm realities of wide-awake life. And now he thinks it bliss to be alive, and says within himself:

"How good is man's life, the mere living!  
How sweet to employ  
All the heart and the soul and the senses  
Forever in joy!"

Seventy years ago and more our fathers were listening to Rufus Choate fascinating lyceum audiences with his lecture on "The Romance of the Sea." Always romance has brooded over the mystery and perils of the great deep, and poetry has dwelt upon its beauty. It has tempted and defied all generations of poets to describe its moods and tenses. It and the human mind are so inexhaustible that several thousand years after Homer and Pindar it is still possible for new things to be said about it. Whittier said a new thing in his lines:

The white waves kneeling on the strand,  
The priesthood of the sea;

and Longfellow when he spoke of "the sea grinding its curved battle-ax on the beach." Who does not instantly see the smooth breaker bending its sharp edge toward the sand? Sidney Lanier also, when he wrote, in a "Marsh Song—At Sunset," of the bright Ariel cloud and the Caliban sea, "monstrous and shambling," "humped and fishy," "huge and huddling."

The seashore is a realm for the imagination. Romance, mythology, and poetry take possession of the mind. The fancy grows tricky and frolicsome. A plain man, only ordinarily imaginative, and far from being a delirious poet, looking from the rocks down into the summer waves, sees and hears things not possible, even if lawful, for him to utter:

Has sight of Proteus rising from the sea,  
And hears old Triton blow his wreathed horn;

sees mermaids riding on a dolphin's back, and catches glimpses of Kingsley's water babies playing in Neptune's garden, and tender-hearted little Tom helping unfortunate lobsters out of the pots.

Horace Greeley wrote Thurlow Weed an invitation for a trip to Rockaway: "If you never bathed in the sea by moonlight or at sunrise in July, it is a pleasure you ought not to miss much longer. Rockaway is magnificent—I mean the ocean, there is nothing else there." Grim-visaged Bismarck, man of blood and iron, with face like a mitrailleuse, frequently staring Europe out of countenance, said years ago, "I am an enthusiast about nature and I love the sea like a sweetheart." In him the sea had a lover as rough and stern and dangerous as itself. Most of us think of Garibaldi at Caprera as a farmer, but when after illness they carried him out on a terrace overlooking the Mediterranean, he cried, "Here I have the sea, and for us sailors the sea is life." Victor Hugo, at Guernsey, constructed a singular lounge, a succession of broad upholstered steps, each one a couch with a pillow, on which, high or low, he stretched himself at full length when weary with work at the tall desk where he wrote standing; and so he mused and rested by the hour, gazing off upon the sea in a reclining posture, which gives a peculiarly

picture-like effect to any scene of land or water so viewed. Arnold of Rugby was born and spent his boyhood in a seaport, and his love for the sea never left him. Almost comical was his explanation of the dullness of some of his scholars at Rugby: "Poor boys! they had been pent up all their days in Nature's plebeian farmyards, the midland counties, without ever a sight of the sea." The Midlands were always like a prison to the Arnolds.

The most attractive coasts are rocky ones, where, as at Mount Desert, bold, broken, ragged cliffs have Thunder Cove and Schooner Head and Spouting Horn, where one lies, like Southey:

On the cliff's huge height  
And marks the billows burst in silver light,

or stands upon the dizzy brink above the weltering flood, and remembers Hamlet following his murdered father's ghost to "the dreadful summit of the cliff that beetles o'er his base into the sea," wherefrom one "looks so many fathoms to the deep, and hears it roar beneath"; where the surges swing their white wrath against the flinty front, to fall back impotent and shattered; where, when the tide rises to due level, the billows boom and bellow in rock caves and crevices; where, on steep, small beaches in gaps between the cliffs, when wind and sea are up, one hears what Tennyson describes:

The scream of a maddened beach  
Dragged down by the wave,

the loose pebbles and stones rolling harshly over each other with a noise like the death rattle in the throat of some marine monster.

Few things are less monotonous than the sea: no lack of episode and incident, incessant rearrangement of elements, inexhaustible variety of appearance and interest. From some cool, breezy perch upon the rocks one can look long away upon the watery vastitude, plural with multitudinous waves all moving unanimous toward the shore; note the color variegations, inshore greens and offshore blues, and, contrasting sharply with the indigo water, the white suds with which the sea washes the face of the ragged ledge; blink at the dazzling brightness which flashes sunward along the water, silver-plating its repoussé surface; observe the lazy clouds loitering like sacred white elephants between sun and sea, and darkening the sunlit bosom of the deep with their vagrant shadows; watch the wheeling and the diving of the gulls, those shrill, hardy, fearless, and tireless nurselings of the waves; then wander down the white beach strewn with dainty shells tinted in pink and pearl, and see fairy rainbows flit through the line of lather left for a moment by the re-fluent wave upon the smooth wet sand; mark the swift process of a breaker's history, its brevity from birth to death, its swelling rise, its growing prominence, its instantaneous upright poise, its crystal curve, its falling crest, its plunge, its



sobbing subsidence—a human life emblemed in miniature. Off yonder the tilting bell-buoy nods to all the thirty-two points of the compass, tolling irregular warning above the rocks, that church bells on the land may not have mariners' knells to toll. Presently a dense mist drifts in from everywhere, smothers sea and land, and shuts us in as with dull gray dripping curtains; and in a little while we hear the huge muffled voice of the fog-siren wading off through the woolly atmosphere like an Indian on snowshoes to find the groping ships and guide them.

If anybody doubts the infinite variety of the ocean, let him, through her books, make friends with Celia Thaxter on the group of rocks ten miles off Portsmouth, kindling in her girlhood the cheery, punctual lighthouse lamps on White Island, calling the sandpiper comrade, poking fun at the burgomaster gull, joining soulfully in the song sparrow's sweet litany, and through the long years after singing from Appledore her hundred poems of the sea, all smelling of the brine, flowing with billowy rhythm, and full of the music, mild or magnificent, hoarse or halcyon, of the ever sonorous sea. The childhood and youth of the blithe, hardy girl on the Isles of Shoals were far from being monotonous.

"Isn't it lonesome off on these bleak rocks in winter?" was asked of a dweller on Smutty Nose, and the islander replied: "Yes, rather, but then not so lonesome as you'd think. Vessels

are passing, weather's changing, and water's allus in motion. The sea is a good deal o' company." The "shoaler" was right. The sea is alive; its bosom heaves, it breathes, it has a pulse. It has more moods and variations than a woman; it has a voice, sometimes a whisper, sometimes a murmur, sometimes a savage growl, sometimes an awful roar. The sea is indeed "a good deal o' company." Immensely interesting and forever fresh, to attempt to describe its eternal changefulness would be like trying to paint a soul.

To be lost at sea seems dreadful from the shore. Land's folk dying mostly prefer to have their bodies rest under the green plush of summer grasses or winter's white quilt of eiderdown. Yet some have loved the sea so much as to desire it for a grave. A young Scottish wife who has crossed the Atlantic many times by requirement of her husband's business, and has witnessed more than once the solemn simplicity of a burial at sea, in which the body is consigned to a vastness almost as measureless as that infinite into which the spirit has passed, would be content if she knew that at life's end her lifeless form, sewed in white canvas and weighted at the feet, would be slid down a smooth plank over the ship's side into the clean, blue ocean. We are told that Father Taylor once said: "When I am dead I do not want to be buried in dirt. Bury me rather in the deep salt sea, where coral

rocks below shall be my pillow, seaweeds my winding sheet, and choral waves above sing my requiem forever." And when the old sailor died they did it not as he said.

One of the oddities of old Diogenes was that he expressed a preference to have his remains fed to the fishes rather than the worms. Where can one have sweeter burial than in the undefilable sea? What better is a narrow cell in the graveyard than a boundless sepulcher in the great deep? Why are not swelling waves, heaving their marbled slopes toward heaven, always falling, yet ever replaced, as fine a monument as granite block or marble shaft? Why not as well blend our material elements with the water as with the soil or the atmosphere? Why not have one's atoms flung up in rainbowed spray or flashing foam as cheerfully as to have them rise in blades of grass above a mound of earth, or float off in puffs of smoke from the chimney of a crematory? What could be more beautiful than that Lady Brassey, who wrote charming books about the voyages of her steam yacht, the *Sunbeam*, should, on her last trip, be laid to rest in midocean in the pure bosom of the sea she loved?

W. E. Henley wrote:

The full sea rolls and thunders  
In glory and in glee.  
O, bury me not in the senseless earth,  
But in the living sea!

Ay, bury me where it surges  
A thousand miles from shore,  
And in its brotherly unrest  
I'll range forevermore.

The following most pathetic incident is given us: A few weeks after the sinking of the Elbe, of the North German Lloyd Line, the Ems, of the same line, was passing the spot where the wrecked steamer lay. "On board the Ems was a passenger who lost his wife and three children when the Elbe went down. He had requested the captain of the Ems to pass slowly over the place where the Elbe's masts could be seen above the water. The order was given to move slowly, the whole crew was called to quarters, flags were hoisted at half-mast, officers and crew stood uncovered, and while a salute of nine guns was fired, the passenger, with tears streaming from his eyes, cast into the sea a flower wreath heavily weighted with lead. The waves closed over the flowers, and the Ems proceeded on her voyage. Why was not this sorrowful tribute of a sad heart to the sacred memory of its beloved dead as beautiful and satisfying as planting a rose-bush on a mound?

The sea begets in mankind moods as various as its own. It typifies and suggests the mystery, immensity, and restlessness of existence, and rolls in upon us a sense of the eternal which underlies and backgrounds all fleeting forms. In the cadence of winds and rhythm of waves we

overhear an undertone of that grand harmony which runs through all God's works. To be beside the sea or on it may easily and naturally solemnize and spiritualize the serious and thoughtful mind. Charles Kingsley wrote in his diary, the night he was twenty-two years old: "I have been for the last hour on the seashore; before the sleeping earth, and the sleepless sea and stars, I have devoted myself to God." Young Midshipman Foote (afterward admiral) paced the deck of the *Natchez* at midnight, communing alone with his conscience between ocean and sky, until he looked up and said, "Henceforth I live for God." Horatius Bonar found by the shore invigoration of soul, for he wrote:

That rugged rock-fringe that girds in the ocean,  
And calls the foam from its translucent blue,  
It seems to pour strange strength into my spirit,  
Strength for endurance, strength for conflict too.

Another, watching the close of a calm summer day, with thoughts of peace and not of evil, wrote thus:

Homeward the swift-winged seagull takes its flight;  
The ebbing tide breaks softly on the sand;  
The sunlit boats draw shoreward for the night;  
The shadows deepen over sea and land;  
Be still, my soul, thine hour shall also come;  
Behold, one evening God shall lead thee home.

## SUNRISE AT SEA

FROM midocean Rossetti wrote: "Yesterday I saw the sun rise over the sea—the most wonderful of earthly sights." Did you ever witness a sunrise at sea on a calm morning?

You look out of your porthole before dawn and see the faintest possible hint of daylight. You go on deck. The east gives a pale promise of the morning, just the first soft glimmer from "the gates ajar" of that heavenly chamber whence the sun will, by and by, come rejoicing. A doubtful, slowly growing light spreads, encroaching on the shadows of the east. The sky beds itself on the dark gray sea with a deep foundation of intense, dark, rich orange, and builds upward with gradations of yellow and green and colors no one could name. Infinite changes gently succeed, miracles of transformation, glory passing into glory. The stars fade slowly, blinking at the increasing light, like old religions dying before the gospel. So smooth is the water, it is certain when the sun rises above the horizon he will stand with his feet on a sea of burnished glass. The clouds have bent a triumphal arch over the place of his coming, and one broad cloud makes a crimson canopy to the pavilion which awaits the king. Graceful, airy clouds hover like spirits that expect a

spectacle; shortly they put on glorious robes, and their faces are bright, as if, like Moses, in some lofty place they had seen God face to face. The meanest tattered cloud that lies waiting, like a beggar, at the gates of the morning, for the coming of the king from his chambers of splendor, is dressed, while it waits, in glory beside which the apparel of princes is vile. For more than an hour, a long, long hour, you watch the pageant of preparation go on in the east. With a quivering hush, you await the grand uprising of the sun. Will he ever come? You almost doubt. At last, when the ecstasy of expectation has grown intense, a thin narrow flash of brilliant, dazzling fire shoots level along the sea, swift as lightning. Swiftly it rises and broadens till, in one moment, the dusk immensity above is kindled by it; another moment, and the far-off gloomy west sees it; in another, the whole heaven feels it; and yet one moment more, and the wide circle of the sea is molten silver.

It is done, all done. The thing, so long preparing, bursts into completion. The day is full blown in a moment. The few heavy piles of clouds on the horizon look like castles in conflagration and consume away; the sun's burning gaze scorches from the rafters of the sky the light cobwebs of mist and fleece; and now the sun has the clean temple of the heavens all to himself, paved with silver, domed with azure, pillared with light.





## **LIFE**



## IN THE HOSPITAL

To be visiting in the same period three inmates of as many hospitals is a considerable reimmersion in the privileges of pastoral life, a humanizing variation from literary labor, a fresh and softening resaturation with sympathy for the hardness of the human lot. Hospital wards are provocative of thought and feeling, a region of austere yet benign reality, where experience bites the inmost nerve and cuts to the core of life, yet finds something bracing, rectifying, and tonic withal. A wealthy American mother with her two daughters spent several years in Europe. The older daughter, a girl of earnest, eager, and affluent nature, grew weary of walking in a vain show and being disquieted in vain with social frivolities and futilities, in a life of artificiality and make-believe; she grew impatient of prim prescriptive conventionalities and existence caged inside a book of etiquette; she longed to measure off her power on something hard, and to grapple reality with her conscious but unused and chafing strength: so one day she rose up sturdily, flung off her lawns and satins, strode away to the wards, donned nurse's garb, and for two years took the training course in a German hospital. A muscular soul is not content with practicing Delsartean attitudes of repose or with

carving the air in calisthenic curves; sooner than that it would choose to be a Laocoön, with a perilous force to strain against for the hardening of flaccidity. An intense craving for reality forced Emily Dickinson to write:

I like a look of agony,  
Because I know it's true;  
Men do not sham convulsion  
Nor simulate a throe.

In the hospital one is in momentary and abrasive collision with reality, poignant, incisive, excruciating. That enormously pretentious, addle-pated, and maudlin imbecility called, in supreme misnomer, "Christian Science," shows a glimmer of sense in staying away from hospitals, where on every cot it would meet its match in realities too rigid and rugged to be ignored, too aggressively actual to be denied or doubted. Imaginary diseases are not admitted there, and illusions are scarce, because their bacillus does not propagate in so sterilized an atmosphere.

Because God is merciful, and because "the best of men that e'er wore flesh about Him was a sufferer," therefore, where dire reality most is, there also is, and should be recognized, the once incarnate Divine Reality, whom Ary Scheffer painted long ago in his "Christus Consolator," and whose unseen presence now is the mitigation and glorification of suffering. Amid suffering, no Divine Presence and purpose being

perceived in it, there is no self-defense except to cultivate insensibility. Next to Christianity the best resort is Stoicism. In Tennyson's verses entitled "In the Children's Hospital," which Mr. Palgrave says is "the most absolutely pathetic poem" known to him, the visiting surgeon brought in by the regular doctor is coarse-looking, harsh-voiced, and rough, seeming like one "who could break his jest on the dead, and mangle the living dog that loved him and fawned at his knee." What an insufferable indecency a rough, indelicate physician is! This surgeon paused over the cot of a poor boy who had been caught and crushed in a mill, but turned quickly away as from a case too hopeless to waste time on, saying lightly to the nurse, "He'll not need your care very long." The woman saw fit to respond: "All the more need to ask the Lord Jesus to care for him. . . . They are all his little ones here, and I pray for them all as my own." With either a half sneer or pity for her faith, the rough man blurted out, "My good woman, can prayer set a broken bone?" And off he went muttering to himself, "All very well, but the good Lord Jesus has had his day." He rightly calls the Lord Jesus and the woman "good," but it is more than they could say of him. The scoff of his hard unfaith daunts not her gentle but unflinching faith, which makes such answer as this: "Say that his day is done? Ah, why should we care what they say? So far

from being done, it has hardly come; it has but dawned; it will come by and by." Yes! And when it fully comes pity and tenderness will fill more human hearts; those who love will enter the service of those who suffer; Christian men and women of means in their lifetime will spare much money, and at their death will leave more of it, to alleviate the appalling and appealing misery of the diseased, the broken, and the pain-stricken, until in human life the sympathetic shall be commensurate with the pathetic.

In "Ugo Bassi's Sermon in a Hospital," Harriet E. H. King reports the discourse she heard Fra Bassi deliver in a Roman lazar house on the Vine and the branches, showing how, to the true branches of the Living Vine, suffering is only pruning for fruitfulness. Standing where "five long chambers, lined with suffering folk, converged," he preached with comforting sweet voice, until he soothed them into submission by persuading them of the presence of Him of whom Whittier sang, "The healing of His seamless dress is by our beds of pain."

Recently lines from W. E. Henley were quoted in a pulpit as a specimen utterance of grim and defiant unbelief; but in those twenty-eight bits of unrhymed rhythms under the general heading, "In Hospital," where in fourteen-line etchings, like small canvases from Meissonier or Tissot, he paints the figures which flit through his recollections of the "Old Infirmary" in Edin-

burgh, Henley shows his sense of the presence and power of religion at work there; shows it in his portrait of the house surgeon, whom he pictures as "sweet, unaggressive, tolerant, most humane," and whose "piety is fresh and true in strain"; and in his portrait of the surgeon in chief, to whose "faultless patience, unyielding will, beautiful gentleness, and splendid skill," "innumerable gratitudes reply"; and in his picture of the nurse, "quick, skillful, quiet, soft in speech and touch," with eyes "acquainted with tears, but ignorant of sin"; and in his picture of the hospital visitor who comes through snow or shine, passes from bed to bed mingling smiles and Bible texts, giving tracts and buns, the sight of her making Henley feel that, thus doing, she "sweeps the Bridegroom's way, strong in a cheerful trust that never fails."

In the hospital are some wholesome and exhilarating spectacles. It is good to see the patience of poor sufferers, and on many an iron cot in the ward there is not only patient endurance, but more gratitude and appreciation of blessings than among the pampered and peevish people who surfeit in luxury, discuss querulously whether life is worth living, and "die full of bitterness and good dinners." It is beautiful to see the sick get well, to see diseases cured by treatment and lives saved by surgical skill, to see those who entered with dread go out with beaming faces. In a Connecticut home a pastor per-

formed the marriage ceremony for one of the daughters of the house. At the end of the evening he bade the bride and groom and the rest good night. The next time he spoke to that bride was five months later, in the operating house of a New York hospital, the day after a critical operation, when he knelt and prayed at her bedside for the sparing of her life. A month later, going to the hospital, he found her dressed, bonneted, and gloved, the picture of blooming health, and saying to his inquiry, "Yes, I'm perfectly well again, and my husband will be here in a moment to take me home." No artist could have painted the light of grateful joy in her face, but it must have done the surgeon good to see it.

In the hospital a man may be rechristened and reëmpowered for highest service. Experience of suffering or sympathetic contact with it may have a regenerative and dynamic effect. At a certain funeral two ministers made addresses. Their tones were soft and low, their utterance deliberate, their manner subdued; but their quiet speech sent a thrill through every heart, because both men had recently tasted bitter cups of grief, and the tremor of it still quivered in their words. One of the most gifted of American pastors in the East wrote in convalescence to a fast friend: "I have suffered a good deal, and am emerging from my sick-room with a new sense of purpose to be more gently considerate of every human creature." Of a brilliant and



earnest minister in the West it was said, "There is a new thrill in the preaching of Dr. G., which is very noticeable since his recent illness." His illness had more than once put him in the hospital. The man who can preach with mighty and helpful power must have entered in some way into the woes of his fellow men, so that he can speak to them intelligently and feelingly. A certain woman lost by death within three years her father, stepmother, two sisters, and husband. These sorrows, which broke up the great deep of her heart, broke open an irrepressible fountain of sympathy, which now pours itself out on the Home for Consumptives, where she ministers almost passionately to others worse afflicted than herself. Suffering has anointed and qualified many for the greatest work of their lives; and active ministering to the suffering and needs of others has saved many lonely and heart-broken men and women from bitterness, gloom, melancholy moping, moroseness, and suicide.

In the hospital as elsewhere in contact with suffering, Christian sympathy is evoked for robust yet dainty ministries, eloquent in expression and ingenious in devising ways and means. Sympathy's signal corps is expert. It does Tesla's feat of telegraphing without wires. It wiggles with eyelids and eyelashes for flags, and a smile is its electric light. It invents deferential ways of honoring those whom it compassionates. Its service seems a kind of homage. When Gen-

eral Worth came back to Governor's Island in the summer of 1898, carrying in a sling the right arm shattered just before in the charge on Spanish lines at Santiago, the officers and men on the island, drawn up in line to receive him, reversed the regular custom in saluting; every man kept his right arm motionless at his side and gave his salute with the left, thus delicately signifying to the wounded hero that the thoughts of all were fixed in sympathetic notice on his disabled and suffering member; and this exquisitely considerate action, offering him the only sort of salute which he could return in kind, certified that in imagination they were putting themselves in his place.

In the hospital one may reflect that the evidential value of Christian sympathy, manifest in the relief of suffering, is extreme. The propaganda of the deed is the final efficiency of strategic faith. Verbal creeds find their correctness and authority called in question. There is disagreement even among the orthodox over the simplest of them. "Can't we agree on the Apostles' Creed?" was asked in a group of conferring ministers of different denominations; and Dr. McCosh answered, referring to a certain clause of that creed: "No, I am not ready to 'descend into hell' with the Episcopalians." But there is one creed which neither makes nor meets unbelievers, the creed of creeds wrought by human hands in loveliness of perfect deeds. Only

in its most convincing form can Christianity make the impression which it made at its beginning in Korea. The Koreans watched the missionaries closely, having never seen such people before. Observing them, they presently constructed a descriptive name, and called them the "Jesus-doctrine-doing people," because they worshiped Jesus, taught his doctrine, and did his commandments. The new apologetics, rearranging our Christian evidences, may do well to put the ambulance corps to the front for its evidential impressiveness.

In a Western city a few years ago, a Methodist lady lay dangerously ill. The Roman Catholic bishop wrote her with his own hand a letter, saying, "Prayers are being offered for you in my churches." When her body was borne through the town toward the cemetery, workmen of all religions and of no religion left their work in shops and factories and stood in rows along the street with uncovered heads, in affectionate reverence for the friend whom they and their families had lost. Her pitiful woman's heart had overbrooded the needy and the wretched of a whole city. So absolute was the confidence of the community in her that men gave thousands of dollars into her hands to disburse and apply as she saw fit for the relief of destitution and suffering. She had so "wrought the creed of creeds in loveliness of perfect deeds" that none could gainsay its divineness. In East Boston a Uni-

versalist minister died. No place was large enough to hold the crowds. Every minister of every denomination in that section of the city attended the funeral except the Catholic priest, and he sent an autograph letter to be read at the service, eulogizing the deceased and explaining that nothing but an imperative engagement kept him from the funeral. The dead minister had lavished himself in stintless toil and sacrifice, day and night, indiscriminately, for the succor and relief of all who were in any sort of pain or trouble or sin. "Ashes to ashes" were fit words for his burial, since the consuming blaze of his enthusiasm for humanity had burned him up. He too had so "wrought the creed of creeds in loveliness of perfect deeds" that there was not in all the town one unbeliever in the majestic and all-subduing divineness of that man's religion. The homage of similar accolade and canonization waits in the great susceptible heart of humanity for all such convincingly embodied demonstrations of the ennobling power of the Christian faith. None can fail to recognize the hallowed glory of the creed of creeds when it expresses itself thus articulately in action.

The hospital of to-day is very different from that of thirty years ago, and is rapidly taking a larger place in human life. The old-time dread of hospitals is no longer justifiable. For one thing the hospital is the best ventilated and healthiest place and the only really clean spot

in town—surgically and microscopically clean. Many persons now dead might be alive if in their illness they had been taken to a good hospital, where every appliance is at hand the instant it is needed, and where constant watch can be kept by nurses and doctors. If that man of might, Bishop Tigert, had been holding a Conference in Baltimore instead of in Indian Territory, when his extraordinary accident befell him, Johns Hopkins Hospital could have saved his life. A veteran of the Civil War, who underwent a severe operation in our Brooklyn Hospital, which relieved him completely, testified that he suffered not the least pain from or after the operation, from which he had a smooth recovery, and that he would think nothing of submitting to another operation of the same sort if it were necessary. A fair and felicitous title is that of the hospital in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, "The House of Mercy."

Is anything more sacred than such charities? In New York city a white-haired man was showing the face of his dead wife to his pastor. As the two men stood over the silent form the bereaved husband's finger chanced to slip into his vest pocket and touched a bit of paper. Taking it out, he held it before his minister and said, "There is a check for twenty-five thousand dollars which my wife left for the Woman's Hospital." That the dearest of women was now past all suffering did not diminish his compassion for the

host of living women whose sufferings needed a hospital; his heart, tenderest to her, was also tender to them. Surely there is urgent need to keep the ambulance corps at work among the wounded on this battlefield of a world where so many are hard hit and sink down disabled.

## OSCAR WILDE: THE CONSUMMATE FLOWER OF ÆSTHETICISM

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

ÆSTHETICISM is a doctrine of some philosophies, a theory of art now dominant in artistic circles, a practical cult followed intentionally by a cultivated few and unintelligently by a miscellaneous multitude. It is a modern Epicureanism having for its cardinal and comprehensive postulate that pleasure is the supreme good. Its prescription for the improvement of mankind is the cultivation of taste and the development of æsthetic sensibility. It maintains the pagan doctrine that the purifying influence in life (the Aristotelian *καθαροίς*) is æsthetic rather than moral, and that the hand of Art is competent to sprinkle humanity with lustral water, making it clean and sweet and beautiful. The two fatal errors that damn this pagan doctrine are its repudiation of morals and its extravagant glorification of the physical senses. Æstheticism has gradually assumed such dogmatic definiteness, bold aggressiveness, and shameless indecency as to startle, horrify, and exasperate a not-over-sensitive public, provoking a justly furious storm

of indignation. Culminating in such a shocking example as Oscar Wilde, it exposed its real nature so glaringly as to make the civilized world stand aghast. But the world will lose the lesson of this horrible example unless it perceives that he is the natural fruit, the logical and legitimate result of the doctrine and practice of æstheticism. Repudiate morals and glorify the senses, and nothing more is needed to insure rottenness and ruin.

For twenty years Oscar Fingall O'Flahertie Wills Wilde posed as the prince of æsthetes in England, afterward spent two years in prison as punishment for loathsome crimes, and died years ago in squalor and misery in the Latin Quarter of Paris, as friendless as he was frivolous, as deserted and destitute as he was degraded, shunned by all mankind excepting Robert Ross, his literary executor, and Lord Alfred Douglas, who paid the expenses of Wilde's burial. Ten years after the forlorn ending of the chief æsthete's career, the patience of the decent portion of mankind was sorely tried by an effort on the part of certain intrepid champions of æstheticism to restore Oscar Wilde to public tolerance and even to favorable regard. In pursuance of this effort Robert Ross published a small prose volume entitled "De Profundis," written by Wilde during his incarceration, and a string of verses entitled "The Ballad of Reading Gaol," written after his release. These vol-



umes, it is claimed, contain a confession, an apology, a self-vindication, a reparation. Upon the basis of these two very peculiar documents, left by a fatally perverted nature, one man wrote of "Oscar Wilde's Atonement," claiming that by what is therein contained the prisoner of Reading Gaol fully atoned for the egregious folly and the horrible evil of his life. But in those documents there was not even a faint desire to offer any apology for himself and his abominable crimes. Another advocate of æstheticism wrote exultantly of "The Rehabilitation of Oscar Wilde." But the effort for such restoration proved as futile as an attempt to rehabilitate an addled egg. Worst of all among the rehabilitators, considering his position, was Professor Hugh Walker, of Saint David's College, Lampeter, England, who published in the Hibbert Journal an article entitled "The Birth of a Soul," the gist of which was that the two documents referred to prove that their unhappy author became, while in prison, a new man by experiencing "a second birth in a sense far deeper than that which is usually attached to the glibly repeated phrases of traditional theology." (A professor who pleads the cause of Oscar Wilde is likely to indulge in flings at traditional theology.) Neither in "De Profundis" nor in "The Ballad of Reading Gaol" was there adequate proof of any real transformation of character. The core of Professor Walker's article was in this sentence:

"The change worked in Wilde while in prison is so enormous that it may fairly be described as the birth of a soul. The new soul was begotten by sin and born of agony." Evidently this professor does not understand the method of spiritual regeneration nor the signs and evidences of a new birth. A new soul is begotten not by sin but by the Holy Spirit convincing of sin, and is born not of mere suffering but of sincere renunciation of sin and repentance unto good works. That the miserable convict of Reading Gaol ever approached or desired such a state of mind there is no proof. So absurd was Professor Walker's ethically shallow article that we cannot wonder at Andrew Lang's comment when he read the account of the birth of a soul, in which the professor describes Oscar Wilde as being as "beautiful as a floating bubble played upon by the sunlight, sporting upon the surface of life." "How innocent some of the clergy are! Anything but a beautiful bubble was Dr. Walker's hero," remarks Mr. Lang. And when he reads further the professor's opinion that it may have been worth while for his "beautiful bubble" to sin as deeply as he did, inasmuch as it helped him to write about it as he did, Mr. Lang exclaims: "Here is quite the newest morality. One reads with incredulous laughter; but the stuff is in print in the Hibbert Journal! In the name of the prophet—Bosh!" Not with laughter are we able to read such dangerously superficial

and demoralizingly sentimental "stuff." It is necessary to protest against the blurring and muddling of the moralities in literary and artistic and even theological circles. It is a duty to insist on the awful moral lessons which drip from the fate of Oscar Wilde like drops of blood from a sharp chisel's edge. Vastly instructive and impressive is it that these tragic ethical lessons are found bleeding down in a realm the rulers of which undertake to exclude ethics altogether—the world of æsthetics. Out from the career of this apostle of æstheticism sounds what Dr. Olin A. Curtis calls "the moral outcry, the serious warning for sinful men."

Wilde's case affords opportunity to study æstheticism in full bloom, since he was in doctrine its most insistent and in conduct its most consistent apostle in modern times. He had the courage or the impudence of his principles and lived down to them without reserve or hesitation, daringly desecrating his life to the unmitigated practice of his luxurious philosophy. The normal ultimate development of æstheticism is sheer abandoned sensualism. Its full evolution is usually repressed either by a decent regard for the opinions of mankind or by fear of the police. But this leader of æsthetes developed shamelessly and fearlessly to the full. Thus he came to be the typical æsthete of his day.

We call him the consummate flower of æstheticism, a most noxious, mephitic, and poisonous

bloom. He tells us how in his college days he started on the course which made him the chief of æsthetes and finally put him in prison: "I remember when I was at Oxford saying to one of my friends as we were strolling round Magdalen College's narrow, bird-haunted walks one morning in the year before I took my degree, that I wanted to eat of the fruit of all the trees in the garden of the world, and that I was going out into the world with that passion in my soul. And so, indeed, I went out, and so I lived." And so, indeed, he did, heedless of moral prohibitions or injunctions and regaling himself with whatever forbidden fruits his rampantly rebellious nature chanced to crave. Unlimited indulgence of all tastes and appetites was his program from the outset. Boundless lilies and languors, roses and raptures he reveled in, reckless of right or wrong, wisdom or folly. So purposing, this elegant Oxford exquisite went out. How he fulfilled his purpose and what came of it he tells us:

I lived for pleasure to the full. There was no pleasure I did not experience. I threw the pearl of my soul into a cup of wine. I went down the primrose path to the sound of flutes. I lived on honeycomb. . . . I let myself be lured into long spells of senseless and sensual ease. I surrounded myself with the smaller and the meaner minds. I became the spendthrift of my own genius, and to waste an eternal youth gave me a curious joy. Tired of being on the heights, I deliberately went into the depths in the search for new sensations. Desire at the end became a malady or a madness or both. I grew careless of the lives of others. I took pleasure wherever it pleased me and

passed on. I ceased to be lord over myself. I was no longer the captain of my soul, and did not know it. I allowed pleasure to dominate me. I ended in horrible disgrace. . . . No man ever fell so ignobly as I did.

Even Michael Monahan, one of his perverse admirers, who wrote of "Oscar Wilde's Atonement," admits that Wilde went to his prison with the burden of such shame and reprobation as was never laid upon a literary man of equal eminence; that not a voice was raised for him, the starkness of his guilt silencing even his closest friends and warmest admirers; that the world at large approved his punishment; that even the people who dislike to see the suffering of any sinner were so revolted by the nature of his offense that they turned away shocked and silent; that the sin of Oscar Wilde was so gross and inexcusable as to deserve no charity and permit of no discussion; that while, if his crime had been mere murder, his genius and his fame would have raised up defenders; as it was, all mouths were stopped and all faces were averted in disgust as the forlorn wretch went friendless to his inevitable doom. That is the sort of criminal who is declared to have made, in a couple of pieces of fine writing, such an atonement as demands from mankind a forgiveness for his sins and a restoration to its favor; and this is the offender for whom Professor Walker, of Saint David's, endeavored to prove in a dozen pages of the *Hibbert Journal* that sin and sorrow so

transformed him while in prison that he came out a new-born soul. The alleged regeneration is most unsatisfactory, and entirely unconfirmed. That the vilest prodigal may return, if he will, from the company of harlots and of swine to the pardon, and purity, and peace of the Father's house, there to abide forevermore, is cardinal Christian doctrine. But that this particularly riotous æsthetic prodigal ever really renounced the error of his abominable ways—of this no proof has been furnished.

Nobody in our time disputes with Oscar Wilde the title of typical æsthete. He is called an *édition de luxe* of æstheticism. In a Paris café he told André Gide that morality had absolutely no interest to him. Very early in his career he announced to the powers of darkness and of light his intention to maintain neutrality toward their disturbing and tiresome contentions. With the age-long quarrel between Right and Wrong his high-and-mighty elegance would not concern itself. His proclamation of neutrality read thus:

In dreams of art  
And loftiest culture I would stand apart,  
Neither for God nor for his enemies.

It was the voice of selfish and luxurious indolence saying: "Let God and his enemies fight their grim battle out while we exquisite æsthetic souls in a Fools' Paradise gratify our tastes and embellish our ease by cultivating the beautiful, carving statues, painting pictures, practicing

graceful poses, polishing fine phrases, inventing plays and poems." But in moral topography there is no neutral zone. Good and evil divide the entire territory of life between them. Pretended neutrals are usually found sitting in the seat of the scornful and pitching their tents toward Sodom. Practically, to hold off from God is to stand in with the adversary. These professed neutrals give aid and comfort to the enemy, and instead of sitting on the fence as indifferent spectators of the tremendous tournament are rushing defiantly on the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler.

The typical æsthete claims to be a superior being, because endowed with what he calls "the artistic temperament," which constitutes an exceptional class, exempt from the restrictions and obligations which condition men in general. In quality compared with ordinary people he feels himself to be as Sèvres china is to common earthenware. But skeptical critics treat these superior beings with remorseless disrespect. Here is Mr. Chesterton saying irreverently:

The artistic temperament is a disease that afflicts amateurs. It is a disease which arises from men not having sufficient power of expression to utter and get rid of the element of art in their being. . . . Artists of a large and wholesome vitality get rid of their art easily, as they breathe easily or perspire easily. But in artists of less force the thing becomes a pressure, and produces a definite pain, which is called the artistic temperament. Thus, very great artists are able to be ordinary men—men like Shakespeare or Browning.

And here is an exasperated editor who, on being told that somebody's fantastic and self-important behavior was due to the artistic temperament, exclaimed: "Artistic temperament! There is no such thing. It is only another name for bad manners and a swelled head." Certain it is that megaloccephaly frequently goes with the so-called artistic temperament. Maarten Maartens makes one of his characters say: "I loathe the 'artistic temperament.' It explains away every weakness and condones every crime."

That Oscar Wilde is the typical æsthete is confirmed to us by the fact that he is a preposterous megalomaniac, suffering with a tympanitic tumefaction of the organ of self-esteem. He imagines that he has played a great rôle in the life of his epoch; regards himself, poor fellow, as exceedingly important to the art and culture of our modern age; says that not only did he himself realize his phenomenal importance very early in his career, but that he forced the world to recognize it too; says also that few men ever held such a position of leadership and had it so acknowledged in their own lifetime. While he recognizes Byron as a figure of some literary significance, he yet feels himself Byron's superior because of his own relations with things nobler, larger, more vital, and more permanent than the author of "Childe Harold" ever knew. He actually thinks he has won in literature an eternity of fame. But he vastly overrates his tonnage



and displacement in human affairs. As Hans Breitmann said of Bimi, the orang-outang, in Kipling's story, "He haf too much ego in his cosmos." His megaloccephaly was incurable. Not even the stern suppressions and menial drudgeries of prison life could reduce his grandiose egotism to moderate dimensions. Looking out upon society from his cell, he pities it for its stupid inability to perceive his exceptional greatness, and for its lack of urbanity in not suspending its laws in deference to a really dynamic and imperial nature like his own. Counting his precious self and his pleasure of supreme importance, he became a professional dandy, fop, and dude, a melodramatic coxcomb with a greed for adulation, drawing after him in his vain, peacocky train a cooing coterie of degenerates characterized by vapidity and viciousness. He considered himself a lord of language, a master of Tusculan prose, and by producing one witty comedy, one poor novel, some artificial verses, a shameful, sacrilegious opera, and a few rhetorical essays, he attained a temporary prominence in the class of writers Labouchere had in mind when he gave the following recipe for making a modern English literary celebrity: "Half educate a vain youth at Oxford; let his hair grow; dip him into erotic French literature; add one idea, and chop it small; log-roll the whole; then serve up as a rival to Milton, Sheridan, and Shakespeare." In the world of

letters he was, at best, only a purveyor of fragrant verbiage, a peddler of sweet lavender on the side-walks of literature.

This typical æsthete counted himself superior to law. "I am a born antinomian," he says; "I am one of those who are made for exceptions, not for laws." But the great cosmic system of things recognizes no such privileged class. The universe is garrisoned and patrolled by sentinels that let nobody pass without the countersign. The stately, solemn, observant laws nod to this antinomian from the judgment seat that they note what he says, and will make record of his doings, and attend to his case—it is sure not to be overlooked nor lost off the docket. There is a parable which says:

Once upon a time a man who was either a lunatic, a fool, or an overgrown infant, went up in a balloon. Nonchalantly remarking that he was not made for laws, he flung himself gayly out of the airship in cool disregard of the law which Newton thought he discovered. The balloonist said he was not made for gravitation. But gravitation did not so understand; gravitation straightway claimed him for its own. And quickly he lay on the ground, a heap of broken bones, shredded muscles, split veins, and spouting arteries, spilling his life into eternity. Gravitation is an indiscriminating power, the obedient servant of the system of things. Having received no official orders to make an exception of lunatics, fools, infants, or antinomians, this mild, mighty, unemotional force brought down the halloonist as apathetically as if he had been a stone.

Similar is the fate of antinomian æsthetes who fancy that they belong to a privileged class,

immune to penalty; who expect the law of gravitation, or the law of cause and effect, or the law of sowing and reaping, or any other of great nature's laws, to become deferential and obsequious when their majesties approach.

Naturally enough Oscar Wilde, the typical æsthete, was as superficial as he was sensual, as faithless as he was filthy. No one is surprised when he tells us that he gives *his* faith to what one can touch and look at, that *his* gods dwell in temples made with hands, and that as for religion, he seldom gives it a thought, but when he does he feels like founding what might be called the Confraternity of the Faithless, for whose communion a priest, in whose heart peace had no dwelling, might celebrate, upon an altar of crumbling clay, with unblessed bread and an empty chalice, the blasphemous sacrament of irreverence, disbelief, and desecration. To be faithless was as natural to him as to be filthy. Distrust of spiritual realities beat with his blood, and disbelief in all things high came easy to him.

For the helplessly hesitant and weakly faithless we have nothing but pity: nothing but sympathy for the pathetic irresolution of natures which suffer like Hamlet from a morbid temperament, a questioning mind, and an indolent disposition, too bewildered and indecisive to commit themselves to any affirmative belief or positive action—who pass their days not really

living but timidly hesitating or listlessly lingering on the skirts of life, and who, while incapable of faith or action, yet hold fast in the dark with a pure intent to all that is clean and fine and dear to honorable souls. But no such pity is possible toward Oscar Wilde. His faithlessness was born of a preference for filth. A degenerate of similar tendency, though in a different circle, was the ex-Reverend Hugh O. Pentecost, as appears from his own base, blatant, insolent words:

Right and wrong, good and bad, moral and immoral, have no meaning for me. The happiest moment of my life was when I found that I had eliminated conscience, root and branch, and had no moral sense whatever. Good and evil are all gammon and spinach to me. If you'd get rid of conscience and all that tommyrot, you'd have the solution to every problem in life. I have no fear of God nor of the devil. I propose to yield to every temptation. I only need to be sure it is a temptation. If it is—good-by, I'm gone. Every temptation I have in the world, I yield to—every one. Character? There is no such thing as character.

Now, whatever the motive for such a wild, anarchistic proclamation as that, one effect of it was sure—by it all persons were duly warned against trusting H. O. Pentecost.

In the long misery of his hard prison life the æsthete of Reading Gaol cast about for relief. He appealed to society for help; what he really wanted was to be released, recognized, reinstated. But society, concerned for the welfare of its members, turned a deaf ear to his entreaty,

not considering it safe to let this moral leper loose among human habitations. Society judged him unfit to be trusted even with his own children; so for their protection the law took them away from him, denied him all sight of them. Of this he writes: "It was a blow so appalling that I did not know what to do, so I flung myself upon my knees, and bowed my head, and wept, and said, 'The body of a child is as the body of the Lord: I am not worthy of either.'" Sorely and bitterly needing help, and looking for it in every direction, this poor sensualist shows his incredible mental and moral aberration by saying, "Neither religion, nor morality, nor reason can help me at all." Only suppose he had had sense enough to flee for refuge to that lofty, benign, and powerful trinity, Religion, Morality, and Reason—what could they not have done for him? Do not all sane men know that this great Three were together perfectly able to heal him of his leprosy, to cleanse him from his sins, to take his feet out of the horrible pit of miry clay and set them upon a rock and establish his goings? If he had made friends with that mighty Triumvirate, he could have washed his robes and made them white, and stood at last with the redeemed, a sinner saved. But contemning and rejecting them, nothing was left possible for his stained and suffering soul but to steep and stew in a witches' broth of irreligion, immorality, and unreason, in a place of dark-

ness, and madness, and fire. If any complain that this is preaching, let them make the most of it. It is what those stern, solemn, and faithful pastors, Nature and Experience, preach age after age in language which forever bites, scorches, and blisters.

One of the heralds of Oscar Wilde *redivivus* undertakes to tell us what high company visited him in jail, and what consoled this vile criminal after he had distinctly flouted religion, morality, and reason :

Art, his adored mistress, whispered her thrilling consolations to the poor castaway—society had taken all from him—liberty, honor, wealth, fame, mother, wife, children—and shut him up in an iron hell, but, by God! it should not take art. With his little pen in hand the world was under his feet. Solemn judge, stolid jury, the beast of many heads and the whited British Philistia, let them come on now!—but soft, the poet's anger is gone in a moment, for beauty, faithful to one who had loved her t'other side o' madness, comes and fills his narrow cell with her adorable presence, bringing the glory of the sweet world he had lost—the breath of dawn, the scented hush of summer nights, the peace of April rains, the pageant of the autumn lands, the changeful wonder of the sea. Imagination brushes away his bounds of stone and steel to give him all her largess of the past; gracious figures of poesy and romance known and loved from his sinless youth, the elect company of classic ages to whom his soul does reverence and who seem not to scorn him; the fair heroines of immortal story who in the old days had deemed him worthy of their love—he would kneel at their white feet now, but their sweet glances carry no rebuke; the kind poets, his beloved masters who bend upon him no alienated gaze; the heroes, the sages who had inspired his boyish heart, the sceptered and mighty sons of genius who had roused in

him a passion for fame—all come thronging at the summons of memory and fancy—a far dearer and better world than that which had denied, cursed, and condemned him, and which he was to know no more.

Much help and consolation the poor convict must have gotten from the fancied visits of this fluttering company of the imagination, yearning for his society and flying from afar for the horrible privilege of settling down about him in the measly squalor of his hideous plight! The only convention that quite matches Michael Monahan's great convocation in Oscar Wilde's cell is that described by Balzac with matchless irony as gathering about the bed of one of his characters:

The peris, nymphs, fairies, sylphs of the olden time, the muses of Greece, the marble Virgins of the Certosa of Pavia, the Day and Night of Michael Angelo, the little angels that Bellini first drew at the foot of church paintings, and to whom Raphael gave such divine form at the foot of the Madonna at Dresden; Orcagna's captivating maidens in the church of Or San Michele at Florence, the heavenly choirs on the tomb of Saint Sebald at Nuremberg, several Virgins in the Duomo at Milan, the hordes of statued and pictured angels from a hundred Gothic cathedrals, the whole nation of ideal figures that artists invent—all these angelic incorporeal maidens rushed to Massimilla's bed and wept there.

The typical case of Oscar Wilde stands to warn us against those who would hold the æsthetic world entirely sundered from ethics and philosophy; who teach that the realm of beauty is a self-contained world, complete in itself, so distinct and independent that the ideals of truth

and moral goodness have no jurisdiction over it and no part in it; who would say, "If a so-called work of art is offensive to reason and morals, then let reason and morals go on about their business, with averted eyes if they please, but not stop to interfere with matters which do not concern them. Even though they have to hold their noses as they pass, let them go by in silence." But for the measurement and appraisal of everything in the human universe there is a higher norm than the canon of good taste, and all the works of man's hands and all the actions of man's life must be judged at the bar of reason and morals, whose decision is irreversible, final, there being no higher court to which appeal can be taken for a work of art or any other work which reason and morals have condemned. It is in a rational and moral universe that all works of art must survive or perish. Over against æstheticism is idealism, which declares that those works which merely gratify the eye or the ear will surely perish, and only those which address the mind and have a message for the soul can survive in such a universe.

The æsthetical people say that to regard art as merely an agreeable accessory to life, and no more, like the minstrel after the banquet, is the view of the uninitiated, the Philistine, the man on the street. But it is perfectly clear that to put æsthetics to the front, claiming for them prime importance, is equivalent to making recre-



ation, diversion, amusement, and pleasure-seeking man's supreme business, and putting life upon a diet of bon-bons, confetti, and delicatessen, the inevitable result being sickly satiety, dyspeptic loathing, and general debility. Any just comparison or intelligent valuation of human interests must rate æsthetics as of relatively trivial importance. They have to do with light surface matters which are to the depths of man's life as the iridescent froth of foaming waves upon the surface of the sea is to the great oceanic deep, vast, unfathomed, and tumultuous, gulf-streamed by tremendous tendencies, tidal-waved by the lift of firmamental forces, and bearing on its bosom brave expeditions and rich argosies. The proper use for æsthetics may be indicated by what Josh Billings said of flattery: "It is like cologne-water, to be smelt of but not swallowed."

The æsthetes regard Christian society as prudish, priggish, and Puritanic. They reject its standards of value and reverse its orders of merit. They rank the code of etiquette above the code of ethics. To them *gaucherie* is worse than guilt. They hold it better to be well dressed than to be chaste, and to be polite than to be honest. With them *bien ganté et bien chaussée* is more than virtue, and good form rather than good morals is the prime social requisite. They explicitly declare that an ear for music is a finer and more covetable possession than a quick con-

. . .

science. They think more of Delsartean grace, of physical pose and carriage, than of divine grace in the heart or the combined beauty of all the Christian graces that ever dressed, decorated, and dignified a human character. They regard a sense of color as more important to the development of the individual than is a sense of justice or a sense of moral decency. And the result of their scheme of development in its ultimate and legitimate effect is what Professor Charlier's broken English pronounced "Ze devil-up-ment of ze human character."

The object of all culture is to improve and perfect man's nature. And this perfecting is best accomplished, not in the realm of sensation by titillation of the sensory nerves or hyperexcitation of emotional sensibility; nor yet in the realm of intellect by stimulating those neurons on the cortex of the brain which are said to be the instruments of mental energy; but, rather and only in the realm of morality, by awakening and educating the conscience, that organ of spiritual perception which takes knowledge of good and evil, right and wrong—that part of man's threefold nature which makes him capable of the beatific vision and by potent spiritual assimilation likens him to God. And the perfecting of the higher nature will insure the due development of the lower. Not only is moral culture fundamentally essential to man's progress; it also pregnantly includes or provides for *all* true

culture. It contains in itself the promise and potency of the healthy development of all human faculties and the well-being of all interests. Man's felicity and dignity are not in the exquisite physical moment, nor in mental clarity and force, but in purity of heart. Nothing can match, and no one is permitted to disparage, the supreme glory of the hour when a clean heart is created, and a right spirit renewed within, when the moral nature comes to itself and takes command of the ship of life. And, on the other hand, artistic culture and all the vaunted æsthetic ideals put together are meager, inadequate, and ineffectual, utterly incapable of organizing man's world in the interest of health, or of wealth, or of nobleness, or of dignity, or even of the loveliness which is their chosen and peculiar province.

To the genuine æsthete, the moralization of life is the sterilizing and monotonizing of life. To him virtue and piety seem as insipid, tame, and tasteless as a diet of oatmeal gruel and cambric tea. He prefers "high" game and spiced viands, seasoned with tabasco, washed down with fire-water. He resembles in a way the Beluch at Isa Tahir who watched Captain Webb-Ware's servant filtering the water for dinner. On account of the bad water in many parts of the Orient, an effective filter was part of the traveling Englishman's camp outfit. At Isa Tahir the only source of supply was a dirty yellow pool thick with filth, and the captain's servant was

running a bucketful of it through the camp filter from which it flowed out clear as crystal. The native Beluch who watched this rushed to Captain Webb-Ware in great trepidation and concern. "Sahib," he said, "do you know what your servant is doing? He is taking all the color, all the strength, all the smell, and all the taste out of the water you are to drink." The Beluch was an æsthete, a gentleman of taste. Such a Beluch was Voltaire, who denounced chastity and purity as interfering with human freedom and happiness; and such Renan became, declaring finally that he regarded an honorable life as a mistake—a tame and fettered life.

When æstheticism banishes morals, then all vices become compatible if not congenial with it. Stephen Phillips violates none of the canons of probability in portraying Nero as being at once a murderous, incestuous monster with a ferocious lust for blood, and at the same time an æsthete with a taste for music and letters, who quarrels with his mother because she lacks the artistic temperament, holds æsthetic tournaments in which he struts and sings with dancers and buffoons to sensuous Oriental music, and dies at last in a theatrical pose crying in frenzied vanity, "What an artist perishes in me!"

The æsthetes even hold that vice and crime may contribute to æsthetic perfection and enhance artistic skill. Years before his own public downfall Oscar Wilde, referring to

Thomas Wainewright, the painter, who was also a noted forger and a proved poisoner, said that Wainewright's career as a poisoner improved the quality of his art. Wilde and Wainewright were not unlike. Both were æsthetic souls, keenly sensitive to beautiful surroundings, and both varied life's dull respectability with a few exciting crimes. Wainewright poisoned several persons because he coveted their money, or perhaps upon æsthetic principles because their personal appearance did not embellish the landscape. This cultured devotee of the beautiful was transported by rough and ready English law to Van Diemen's Land, where he continued his æsthetic criminal career, painting pictures and poisoning people by turns. Oscar Wilde says that being a murderer made this man a better painter. Is mixing poisons a training for mixing colors? If, as the æsthetes hold, art is the thing of highest importance, and, if, as the typical æsthete holds, experience in crime can improve art's quality, then the æsthetes have provided themselves with a justification for their crimes. But it is a devilish delusion that a vile or wicked life can improve any of the products of genius. Mr. Mabie is right in saying that

the artist never lived who violated the laws of life, moral or physical, without damage to the quality of his genius and to the value of his work. A man may come out of the gutter as one has come in our time, to sing a song or shape a lyric, but no man ever came out of the gutter to write the Divine Comedy or Shakespeare's masterpieces.

One cannot do or see great things without perfect health of body, mind, and soul. There is only one road to greatness, and that is the road of character. If we lose the purity and sincerity and innocence of the child, we may still do technically clever and artistically flashy things, but we will cease to do great things because the power to conceive them will have passed from us.

Oscar Wilde's extravagant praise of Paul Verlaine is what might be expected from him, but no great or healthy work could possibly come from a man of Verlaine's habits, all of whose writings were a product of the heady fumes of wine. When the powerful excitement of his revel was at its height Verlaine wrote with fiery force things vulgar and impure. In the weak, tremulous state of reaction and remorse which follows prolonged debauch, he attempted devotional poetry. But his alleged spirituality is almost as unwholesome as his sensuality. Virtue and temperance and health are essential to the production of great art. This is one reason why there is so little that is great in current French literature; and this is why, when an Oxford undergraduate expatiated to Dr. Jowett on the charms of a typical French novel, the master of Balliol said to the student, "What sentence is written above the entrance to hell?"

"'Abandon hope, all ye that enter here,'" replied the young man.

"No," said Jowett, "it is, '*Ici on parle Français.*'"

Naturally, the æsthetes freely condone, or,

rather, ignore, the crimes of their champion and chief, and would like to restore him to his pedestal and publicly reassemble his worshipers about his feet. So much as this their very principles require of them. A Capuchin monk once said to one of Renan's friends, "He has done many evil things, your friend Renan, many evil things; *but* he has spoken well of Saint Francis, and Saint Francis will arrange all that." With similar condonation would the artistic guild say of Oscar Wilde, "He has done many evil things, *but* he has spoken well and written finely about Beauty; therefore he holds a place in the Valhalla of æstheticism among the heroes and champions of the Beautiful." And if what Mr. Chesterton says is true, some amends should be made to Oscar Wilde. Chesterton thinks society treated Wilde unfairly, inasmuch as it encouraged him for years in preaching an immoral attitude by fêting and lionizing him while he was posing as the leader and teacher of the æsthetes; and then when he took to practicing the immoral attitude he had preached, society closed in on him and restrained his active immoralities by means of handcuffs and prison cells. Mr. Chesterton fails to think clearly. He should discriminate. The people who for years fêted Wilde for preaching immorality were not the people who arrested him when caught in the flagrant criminal act. The lionizing was done by a coterie of self-demoralized æsthetes and their following;

the punishing was done by the official agents of the great sane, majestic moral sense of the community sturdily bent on enforcing decency. Society took no harsh, exceptional, or inconsistent course in Wilde's case. A free community is always tolerant of mere theories, however pernicious, immoral, or destructive; but when the theorist puts his objectionable and injurious theories into practice by overt acts, then he encounters the teeth of the effective machinery which society maintains for its own protection and which does not discriminate between æsthetes and other anarchists. When Chesterton charges society with unfairness toward Oscar Wilde he errs through his failure to discriminate between a coterie and the community. But he is perfectly correct in saying that what this chief of the æsthetes did was simply to carry out in practice the doctrines of his cult. He lived his principles to the full, and so he became the consummate flower of æstheticism. Usually it is some weak-minded or unbalanced disciple of destructive theories that is rash enough to perpetrate the extreme overt act logically enjoined by the evil teaching, as when Czolgosz, fired by what he has heard at anarchist meetings or read in yellow journals, goes out to do the act which the teachings of the leaders suggest and justify. But in the case of the æsthetes, those anarchists against the moral law, it is their chief prophet, apostle, and teacher who has the nerve, the reck-



less daring to practice what he preaches and to live down to the principles they all uphold.

Nothing is plainer than the superficiality and futility of æstheticism as a means of culture. What proof more positive of its superficiality is possible than the æsthete of Reading Gaol who, having devoted his life to cultivating his æsthetic taste to the last degree of exquisiteness, at the height of his career knows as little of true refinement as a tree-toad knows of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. That the man who was the consummate flower and the complete embodiment of æstheticism could be at once so dainty and so dirty, so squeamish and so squalid, so nice and so nasty, is proof that the refinement of a merely æsthetic culture goes not much deeper than does the rouge on a courtesan's enameled cheek. As to its futility, the words of a bright Englishman are true: "This is the *carpe diem* philosophy; but the *carpe diem* philosophy is not the philosophy of happy people, but of very unhappy people. Great joy does not gather the rosebuds while it may; its eyes are fixed on the immortal rose which Dante saw: and great joy has in it the sense of immortality. . . . No blow has ever been struck at the natural loves and laughter of men so sterilizing and paralyzing as this *carpe diem* of the æsthetes." Both the superficiality and the futility of æstheticism are conspicuous and pitiable. It fails so entirely with both lobes of its brain that one can hardly imagine how

unsuccess could be more complete. Starting out with the principle of sacrificing all things to the pursuit of pleasure, it ends by achieving as its most obvious result in its typical case the most phenomenal and excruciating misery. And beginning by excluding all considerations and aims except the production of beautiful works of art, it ends, as a brilliant critic tells us, by having no art worth showing. "There are many real tragedies of the æsthetic world and the artistic temperament," says this critic, "but the greatest tragedy of the artistic temperament is that it cannot produce any art." We should not count this to be æstheticism's worst tragedy, but he states correctly the utter futility of the æsthete's misguided endeavor.

The poison of æstheticism accounts largely for the inferiority and viciousness of modern art. Critics who are not of the clergy, and who know more about the matter than we can, report that demoralization is nearly complete in the art world. We are told that most of the artists of to-day hold the doctrines of sheer thorough-going æstheticism. With cynical disregard of moral considerations, they regard in any work of art only the artistic content. "Art for art's sake" is their intentionally and explicitly immoral motto. James Huneker, the special critic of musical and dramatic art, says that the puzzling thing about the new dispensation in art is its absolute departure from the ethics of Chris-

tianity, and its substitution of the ethics of Spinoza ravished by the rhetoric of Nietzsche, who called himself the great immoralist, denied the soul, and proclaimed the rank animalism of man. The moral dangers of the art world and the whole æsthetic realm must be considered real, and not the nightmare of a preacher's indigestion, when even a decadent like George Moore says he does not believe that the moral sense can flourish in an artistic atmosphere, and that modern art as it exists is positively unfriendly to morals. Art as the handmaid of religion and morality, as in the great old days of Angelo, and Raphael, and Leonardo da Vinci, and Fra Angelico, was one of the most glorious accessories, embellishments, and inspirations of civilized life. But art estranged from morals and religion, as in these degenerate and erring days, sinks to mediocrity and pettiness and develops the seeds of decay and death: becomes, in fact, a plague and a pestilence against which society needs to put up a quarantine.

In no department of the world of art has morality flourished less than in the dramatic. In spite of all the talk about reforming the stage, the best dramatic critics tell us that the theater to-day is disgraced by plays which are a "dramatized stench," and which frankly represent a life of filthy vice as better than a life of honest toil. The corrupting influence of the theater and the tendency of dramatic art to degenerate are seen

in the fact that a man who set out a short time ago to reform the stage, and wrote what he called "Plays for Puritans," after a while offered the public a drama which shocked the sensibilities of a Tammany chief of police and was prohibited by that not over-scrupulous functionary. One winter, in New York, out of the realm of art came the ghost of Reading Gaol to flap its obscene wings over the Metropolitan Opera House with a play wallowing in lubricity and reeking with suffocating moral stench, Oscar Wilde's opera of Salome, which a capable and dispassionate critic says should be staged nowhere outside of Sodom. *Æstheticism* is not justified of its children. To repudiate morals and to glorify the senses is to insure disease, death, putrefaction.

## A DOCTOR'S CONFESSION

OUR attention is arrested and held by Dr. Stephen Paget's "Confession" because a thoughtful and experienced physician's views of his own profession, of mankind, and of life in general have a good chance of being interesting; also because this particular doctor declares with positiveness his belief in Psyche, the Soul (which is our peculiar concern), as being as certainly a reality as is the body (which is his special study). We love him because he hates Haeckel, and smites him and his miserable, measly materialism heartily and heavily. Though compelled by his trade to dig in the bowels of nature, this physician proclaims his faith in the indestructible human soul.

It is the business of both Medicus and Clericus to deal directly and immediately with human nature, not with things but with people, though from opposite sides—one the physician of the body, the other the physician of the soul. The twofoldness of man should be obvious to both. One, concerned chiefly with the body, cannot fail to notice the powerful influence of the mind on some physical conditions; the other, interested primarily in the moral nature, the soul, knows that the spiritual life is not unaffected by bodily conditions and that the spirit is mani-

fested and measured by the deeds done in the body.

The human being is two-sided, and the whole man can be approached and affected from either side. You may excite the whole man, body and mind, by putting a stimulant (say alcohol) into his stomach; and equally may excite the whole man, spirit and body, by putting an idea (say an exasperating insult) into his mind. Physician and clergyman ministering to the same being, attending helpfully to his life, and bent on variously saving him, know each other as coworkers and brothers, meeting often in sick-chambers, watching in anxiety, rejoicing in convalescence, or sorrowing over death. It can scarcely be regarded as strange if, as happens to other specialists, the minister should be liable to overlook the importance of the body or overestimate the range of the power of the human spirit, and the physician should be in danger of coming to think the body to be everything—the only reality—the candle of which what is called the soul is only the flame, so that when one burns out the other ceases to be. The most significant value of Dr. Paget's book is that in it he asserts with full conviction the reality, independence, and persistence of the soul.

This book is a "confessio," not in the sense of a story of personal sins spoken through a lattice window in a two-compartment wooden box to a father confessor, but in the sense, say, of the

Westminster Confession, in which men stated some of the things which they knew or believed. That is this author's purpose. Having experienced and observed, investigated, reflected, and reasoned for years in close contact with the facts of life, he wishes now, before it is too late, to say what he thinks. Hear him: "I only want to confess what I have learned, so far as I have come, from my life, so far as it has gone." Hence this book, the author of which is said to be Dr. Stephen Paget, son of the famous Sir James Paget, who was surgeon to Queen Victoria and King Edward. Dr. Paget thinks well of his own profession. He says: "There is not one profession that we need envy, for there is none that gives its students such a good introduction to things as they are." On the title-page he quotes Louis Stevenson's opinion that the physician is the flower of our civilization, that he shares as little as any in the defects of his period, and most notably exhibits the virtues of the human race. Nobody would expect us to claim less than that for the ministerial profession. He asks, what better profession than medicine, what more liberal and lovable, for a young man who does not feel a definite vociferous call to anything else? If we all sat and waited for such a call, we would sit there forever. "Give me something to do," cry the young men; "put me into a decent profession and let me take my chance. Jack is in the Navy, and Joe is in business in the city, and

bless me also, O my father, and find me some work, I don't much care what." And in this state of manly and wholesome impatience, it comes to pass that one more young man sets out to be a doctor. "Every year," says Dr. Paget, "men enter the medical profession who are neither born doctors, nor have any great love of science. Without a welcome, or money, or prospects, they fight their way into practice, and in practice they find it hard-worked, ill-thanked, and ill-paid: there are times when they say, 'What call had I to be a doctor?' But they stick to it, and that not only from necessity but from pride, honor, conviction; and heaven, sooner or later, lets them know what it thinks of them." He says they may some day conclude that their diploma, earned by hard study and paid for by hard cash, was a summons from heaven; and he adds: "If a doctor's life may not be a divine vocation, then no life is a vocation, and nothing is divine." It is good for any man, whatever his profession or position in life may be, to be able to feel that way about his lifework.

What Dr. Paget says of the change from preparatory studies in the medical college to actual contact with living, sensitive, suffering reality in hospital practice, is in some sense true of the transition from college or professional school to actual practice in almost any sphere of activity. In each case it is a plunge into *things as they are*.



Sickness, as Lucretius says of impending death, shows us *things as they are*: the mask is torn off, the facts remain. That is the spiritual method of the hospital: it makes use of sickness to show us *things as they are*. This delicate word "sickness" includes drink, the contagious diseases, infant mortality, starvation, the sweating system, the immigrant alien, dangerous trades, insanity, childbirth, heredity, attempted suicide, accidents, assaults, and all the innumerable adventures, tragical or comical, which end in the Casualty Department. To a young man of good disposition, tired of the preliminary sciences, and of humanity stated in terms of anatomy and physiology to the satisfaction of the examiners, this plunge into the actual flood of lives is a fine experience. Hitherto he has learned organisms; now he begins to learn lives. He need not go, like other young men, for that lesson to the slums, for they come to him; and that thrilling drama, *How the Poor Live*, is played to him, daily, by the entire company, hero and heroine, villain and victim, comic relief, scenic effects, and a great crowd of supers at the back of the stage—undesired babies, weedy little boys and girls, Hooligans, consumptive workpeople, unintelligible foreigners, voluble ladies, old folk of diverse temperaments, and many, too many, more comfortable but not more interesting people. It all happens so naturally, with such a quick and sure touch: the reality of the day's work, the primal meaning of the crowd, the clash of hand-to-hand encounter with diseases and injuries, urge him to unexpected uses of himself. Here are the very people of the streets, whom he passes every day, here they are coming to him for help, to him of all men, telling him all about it, how it happened, what it feels like, why they did it; looking to him, right away, for advice and physic. They are no two of them quite alike, and their records, laid before him, range through every intermediate shade from purest white to a nauseating black. He begins to see that he has more to learn than the use of a stethoscope: *he must learn lives*. The problem of lives exalted, or sunk, or messed away, knocks at his heart. Let other young men write lurid little books, and tear the veil from the obvious, and be proud of that achievement. What are

they to him, who entertains daily, as a matter of course, both hell and heaven? I say that he sees *things as they are*; but I do not say that he puts a right interpretation to all that he sees. At first, I think, he is apt to look too hard at the dark side. There are times when all London seems to him rotten with contagious diseases and sodden with drink, a city as gross and vulgar as Rome under Nero; and down with a crash come Faith, Hope, and Charity, and he reads the universe as a bad job, and half wonders what is the good, in such a world, of being good. That is the shock of collision with things as they are: and you may hear him quoting, "Hell was a city very much like London." But the bright side, the courage and patience of the majority of his guests, their courtesy, their honor, their humor, are always before him: which may help him to set up again, on stronger pedestals, these three, Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Dr. Paget speaks of the severe and chastening disciplines which medical practice inflicts on the practitioner. There is the discipline of living under heavy responsibility and in fear of making a mistake—a serious or fatal mistake. This fear of doing harm is called *the strain of medical practice*. Next is the depressing burden of his failures; some of his patients die or fail of a cure in his hands; and he knows that sometimes, justly or unjustly, the blame is laid on him. There are, indeed, various chastisements which doctors suffer at the hands of their patients, or at the hands of their brethren. Says this physician:

When we take our work in hand it takes us in hand, and chastises us. Nothing is more certain than its use of the scourge on us; and we need not go outside the day's work to learn obedience. "*Talk of the patience of Job*," said a hospital nurse, "*Job never was on night duty in a hospital.*"

She had found the discipline of practice in her profession, and it had found her. And we find ours. Consider, in what measure we are subject to public opinion, and for what good purposes. We have to bear, now and again, gossip, ill-will, distrust, the proud man's contumely, the insolence of office. There really are people—happily, they are rare—who dislike all doctors, and are full of stories against us. In the silly season, but they never seem to go out of season, they write in this or that paper, under the head-line, "Are Doctors Avaricious?" To them we are Shylock; they even go back to the old idea, which to my thinking was the true idea, of a comic Shylock. And, in every place, there is gossip, and one or more idiots who wound characters to kill time. As for gossip, we are none of us perfect, and some of it is true; and the rest we can alleviate. Like the pilgrim, condemned to walk to Rome with peas in his shoes, who accepted the penance, but boiled the peas, so is the solvent action on gossip of a good temper and a clear conscience. But the young doctor, the new doctor, in a gossipy house, must never be off his guard. He has seen and prescribed for his patient, and has said all that need be said to the friends; and there is tea, and what seems a favorable opportunity for extending the practice. Trust them not, young man: put your fingers in your ears, and flee from the City of Destruction of Reputations. If you must stay, do not stay long, and keep the door of your lips. Talk of the patient, of the weather, or of the proposition, which will as surely as the bread-and-butter be handed to you, that "There is a good deal of illness about." Avoid all topics of church and state, quote neither poetry nor prose, give neither censure nor approval to music and the drama, hide your liking for any art but your own. Leave behind you, for gossip to lap, a saucerful of the milk of human kindness. Never mind about producing a favorable impression: *produce this one impression: that you know your work*, and that it will not be your fault if it fails; and then flee. Besides gossip, which is the discipline of our tempers, we have to bear opposition, which is the discipline of our convictions. The antivaccinationist, the antivivisectionist, and the Christian

Scientist are against us. So much the better for our faith in our calling. And, of course, we have no quarrel with anybody who honestly wants to know why we believe in the protective efficacy of vaccination, the necessity for experiments on animals, and the reality of disease. Our quarrel is, and should be fiercely maintained, against the chief offenders, the societies, the paid officials, the itinerant lecturers with their platform facts. Yet I advise the young doctor not to rush unarmed, not even to the defense of science and ethics. Our opponents fight us with platform facts; we must beat them with true facts. I advise all students, when they have time, to get a fair knowledge of these three subjects, which cannot be done without steady reading. Not only their duty to their profession but their own interests urge them to be thus definite; neither the profession nor the public admires Mr. Facing-both-ways. And it is well, also, to keep close at hand for reference a store of instances and figures; for we ought to be as firm on the right side as our opponents are fluent on the wrong side.

Dr. Paget says that what people want of a physician is not that he be a man of other accomplishments, of wide general reading, of artistic culture, but that he shall understand his business, and their condition, and be able to help them, and be completely absorbed in them and intent on serving their needs. In what he says there may be some hint for ministers. The greatest sermons are those that *help* people; and the highest praise a minister gets is when some earnest soul says, "You helped me." And a minister's own experience of sickness, doubt, affliction will help him to understand and help others. Hear how this experienced physician talks to the young doctors:

I know of one patient who said to a friend, "*I don't want my doctor to talk to me about the National Gallery*"; which is a shrewd saying, and has taught me to avoid all such dangerous topics. Anyhow, people who are seriously ill care no more for preciosity in us than for gold-dust in beef-tea. What they want is a man who has just had and cured a case exactly like theirs; and he need not be a judge of anything outside their insides. It is poor comfort to them, to know that he is very fond of really good poetry. Young men, whose pride bruises at a touch, are apt to be offended, when they are thus classed as plumbers and glaziers of the body. Perhaps they have never been seriously ill, never come to that point of sharp thought where the physician, the surgeon, the anæsthetist, are your best friends, your Godsend, not because they talk to you about the National Gallery, but just because they do not talk, but dose, anæsthetize, and incise you. Every doctor, early in his course, ought to stand at that point.

You cannot be a perfect doctor till you have been a patient: you cannot be a perfect surgeon till you have enjoyed in your own person some surgical experience. Enjoyed, I say, and stick to the word. Count the ways of enjoyment. To be the dear object of so much care and friendship, to be compassed about with hopes and prayers, is there no pleasure in that? To behave nicely, and nothing common do or mean, upon that memorable scene, but lie on the operating-table like Patience on a monument, is there no pleasure in that act of self-control? On you, on you, rests the love of many hearts, and every pulse in the house is quick with thinking of you. Somebody, these last few days—for I take it that you are married or, at the least, engaged—has been at her wits' end of miserable anxiety for your sake: and behold, this morning early, she brings you roses and lilies, and wears a wonderful mechanical smile, a most curious grimace, which makes her more beautiful than ever. It is time for the operation. You are, what is so rare in this world, at rest. The very elements of thought and of will, the disposition of the least bodily act, are now to be taken out of your hands. Put them by your side, and shut your eyes. Go to sleep:

do nothing, think of nothing, be nothing. Shut your eyes; go to sleep. Before you wake, back in bed, the good news of your safety will be rapped out, like a spiritualist message, at remote telegraph offices; and kind people, ever so far off, will be saying, all in a breath, "*O my dear it says doing favorably operation perfectly successful no immediate anxiety thank God best love Tomkins*"; and your lady of the roses and lilies with her pretty face all smudged with crying, and one ear red with listening at the key-hole, will give you such a kiss as no man deserves to have twice. And you, though you feel horribly sick, being so full of ether that you reek like a peppermint-drop, are proud, yes, and happy and through the fumes of the clinging anæsthetic you are the captain of your soul. Besides, see what you have gained in practice.

To be ill, or to undergo an operation, is to be initiated into the mystery of nursing, and to learn the comforts and discomforts of an invalid's life; the unearthly fragrance of tea at daybreak, the disappointment of rice-pudding when you thought it was going to be orange-jelly, and the behavior of each constituent part of the bedclothes. You know, henceforth, how many hours are in a sleepless night; and what unclean fancies will not let us alone when we are ill; and how illness may blunt anxiety and fear, so that the patient is dull, but not unhappy or worried; and how we cling to life, not from terror of death, nor with any clear desire for the remainder of life, but by nature, not by logic. In brief, you learn from your own case many facts which are not in textbooks and lectures: and your patients, in the years to come, will say that they prefer you to the other doctor, because you seem to understand exactly how they feel. [People will prefer one minister to another for the same reason—he understands them.] I wish you, therefore, young man, early in your career, a serious illness, or an operation, or both. For thus, and thus alone, may you complete your education, and crown your learning with the pure gold of experience. The crown of experience is like the crown of Lombardy, a band of iron set in a band of gold; and the iron of that crown is considered more valuable than the gold.

Others than physicians may be interested in what is said of the advantages of plain and simple apartments for a professional man :

Of the spirit of medical practice, this much may safely be said, that it does not readily enter into a life which is full of furniture. It must have opportunity for its influence; it cannot write on walls which are covered with pictures, or make its voice heard above music and much talking: the life must be clear, affording space, and observing silence. I have had the honor of knowing many great physicians and surgeons; and I see this in all, or nearly all, of them, that, when they were young, they made ready, for the coming of the spirit of practice, apartments of the utmost simplicity: quiet, bare, whitewashed, empty little rooms. Some of us block the room with all that we put in it. I know a man who did that. He crammed his brains with books, and learned whole sciences by heart, and read till he could read no more; that was how he furnished the room, and it looked like the inside of a second-hand furniture shop, and he could hardly move without knocking down something, or hurting himself. He was a young man with a great deal of taste; so he decorated the room, very prettily, with soft-colored upholstery, and old engravings, and casts of the Parthenon frieze, and a piano, and complete editions of the poets. "Now," said he, "the place is ready, at last, for the spirit of practice." But practice went elsewhere. The spirit of practice loves to enter such lives as offer to it neither adornments, nor views out of the window, but a bare room and expectant silence, and passionate longing for it, and for it alone.

Speaking of the rewards of his profession, this is part of what Dr. Paget says:

Many and great are the rewards in kind which we have of practice: the world never seems tired of telling us how thankful we ought to be for our blessings. And, truly, we are. The depth and the width of our work, its bewildering diversity, its vivid discoveries, its science, all these make

us happy. So does its humanity, so rich in the friendship and the good will of our patients. I hesitate to allude to their gratitude, because modern thought is inclined to explain away gratitude; still, there it is, and we, not being the least bit like Wordsworth, and seeing many sights that oftener leave us mourning, are very fond of gratitude. Further, we have this reward of practice, that we are, within ample limits, independent of all forms and ceremonies. Wherever we go we are taken for granted, and the world neither suspects our motives nor doubts our word. We have nothing up our sleeves. Nowhere need the doctor feel, if the phrase may be pardoned, out of it, save that he may be embarrassed by sudden admission inside a sacred circle of hopes and fears all spinning round a case that he has never seen before. We come natural to people; which is more than can be said of every profession. [It can be said of the pastor.] It is an honor to come natural to people; and it is a pleasure. Everywhere, from the smart set, whatever that may be, to the slums—and we know better than most folk what the slums are—we are understood and welcome. "I'm so glad you are here," says the grand house, all huddled under the blow which has fallen on it; the house hardly knows itself, the invitation cards over the mantelpiece have an air of mockery, the sounds of the street are insufferable, the very window blinds are tugging at their cords to be let down. "I'm so glad you are here," says the little house in the slums; "come along quick, doctor, she's awful bad." Of course we must not be proud that we are wanted. The cat's-meat man, for instance, is not proud that the cats want him, and come twisting out of every area. Still, if I were he, I should try to be glad of such a welcome. But to be wanted by men and women, to come natural to them in time of trouble, is a very different matter, and may fairly be called a career. The doctor goes straight to his work, and is let through to it without delay or hindrance: his business is privileged, his authority admitted, his presence explains itself. At once he comes natural into lives all scared and shaken by some disaster so unexpected that he seems the one natural event in the house. O, we have our



faults, and may be made to look very funny on the stage or in a novel; but life is not measured that way.

What doctors think of the most successful delusion of our day is probably well indicated in the following:

If we are to fight Christian Science, we must make haste, for it will not long survive its founder. It will die before it gets to the poor. Not that it shows any great anxiety to get to the poor, so long as it can get at the rich. It will go down hill quick, for it is not strong; how could it be, with such a family history, with Fear for its father, and with such a mother as Mrs. Eddy? See how delicate it is. It says nothing, or next to nothing, about our sins; does just mention them, but tends to explain them away as illusions. It appeals to our belief in our own cleverness; hints at a philosophical superiority, a purer vision, a rarer atmosphere; suggests to me that Plato and I would find a lot to talk about, and that most people are in darkness, but I am in light. Its one vital doctrine is this, that God is real. What, then, is the God of Christian Science? He is, if you unwrap him, the Infinite, the One, the All, merum Ens, pure Being; above superstition, above anthropomorphism, above the comprehension of bishops, priests, and deacons, especially deacons. This comfortless word "Being," whether in Greek, Latin, or English, always leaves me where it finds me. Still, in this high creed we must recognize an air of Aristotle, a sense of freedom, and an exercise of the reason, which must all of them, especially the last, be very refreshing to fashionable society. Here, in this cult of Being, we have, if the phrase may be forgiven, a very large order. For you cannot worship merum Ens without paying for that intellectual treat. If nothing is real but pure Being, and we must lift up our thoughts all that tremendous way, or nowhere, then it is plain that health, comfort, and life are no more real than sickness, pain, and death. If the black squares on the chessboard are not real, neither are the white; and a strong spine is just as illusory as a weak one. Christian Science, on its

own showing, has only substituted one set of illusions for another. "Look at this advertisement," says the proprietor of a soap or a pill, "and you see green on a red ground. Shut your eyes, and you see red on a green ground." That is how the proprietors of Christian Science capture men. There must be much virtue in a soap, if you can see its name with your eyes shut: and red on green must, of course, be more real than green on red, because green on red is what you see with your eyes open, just like ordinary people. It comes to this, that the Christian Scientist, though she sounds very subtle, is not; for she has two Gods, one to explain her pleasures, and the other to explain away her pains; one popular and in touch with the world, the other metaphysical and not in touch with the world. The testimonials, at the end of the official book, are sad reading. Here are the obsessed, they who cannot help thinking of their insides, and watch for symptoms, and talk of diseases, and read medical books, and are very sensitive, and never know what it is to feel well. The neurotic man who lost all liking for tobacco, thanks to Christian Science; and the diphtheritic child who coughed up some membrane, thanks to Christian Science, and sang a hymn; and the lady who had such a bad time with her first baby, and such an easy time, thanks to Christian Science, with her second—they are all witnesses. You note, especially, that if a man is in such pain that he cannot fix his mind on Mrs. Eddy's methods, he may have morphia till he can; and that surgical cases, for the present, had better be left to the surgeon, till the world has more faith; but you are not told which cases are surgical and which are medical. I should like to collect and publish what our chief physicians and surgeons know of the works of Christian Science. But apart from its works, and the ill-gotten gains of its proprietors, I hate its faith; and, if it were going to stay in this world, I should thank my God that I am not.

This physician, saying that doctors need to pray for many gifts, quotes the prayer of the ancient pagan, Juvenal, which is considered "one

of the world's masterpieces," though it is poor compared with Christian prayers. Juvenal says that we know not how to pray; that we pray for wealth, glory, elegance, beauty, strength, long life, and that if the gods should grant our prayers we would thereby bring on ourselves misery and ruin. And Juvenal adds:

Well, then, shall men stop praying? If you want my advice, you will let the gods themselves decide what is good for us and useful for our stations in life. For they will give us, not the pleasures of the moment, but all that is most fit for us. Man is dearer to them than to himself. Still, that you may have something to say, some prayer to go with your sacrifices, pray for a sound mind in a sound body. Ask for a brave heart, wholly free from the fear of death; a heart which reckons mere length of days among the least of Nature's kindnesses, and can bear all hardships, and cannot lose its temper over trifles, and covets nothing, and is persuaded that the bitter labors of Hercules have more salvation in them than the lust and luxury of Sardanapalus. Behold, I am telling you of those gifts which you can give to yourself.

To these words of Juvenal our physician adds the following:

But these gifts will not suffice. Pray to the gods, also, for a fair measure of the love of science, a good memory, a quiet manner, the accurate use of your hands and your senses, and give thanks for the necessity of working for a living and the privilege of being useful. Pray even for opposites; for humility and pride, for plodding business ways and for the wings of ambition, for a will both stubborn and flexible; and, *above all, for that one gift which has been the making of the best men in our profession, the grace of simplicity of purpose.*

Amen! Not in the profession of medicine alone, but in all professions, and preëminently

in that of the ministry, is singleness of aim the making of the best men—men not distracted by restless, gadding ambitions for notice and place, emolument and preferment, but devoted to their God-given task and concentrating on it all their thought, desire, and energy; trusting themselves and their fortunes wholly to their fidelity, diligence, and devotion, whithersoever these may carry them.

## ROBERT BROWNING IN HIS WIFE'S LETTERS

ON September 12, 1846, when Robert Browning was thirty-six and Elizabeth Barrett was forty, they were married in Saint Marylebone Church, London. On June 29, 1861, in Casa Guidi, on the Via Maggio, Florence, Italy, she died, smiling, in his arms, her head resting on his cheek; and of the peacefulness of her departure the husband, whose strong arms held her fragile form against his heart, wrote to a friend: "God took her to himself as you would lift a sleeping child from a dark, uneasy bed into your arms and the light." "So ended on earth," says Frederick G. Kenyon, "the most perfect example of wedded happiness in the history of literature, perfect in inner life and poetical expression."

Our most intimate and complete knowledge of their life together is from her letters written to various friends. One value of these is that in them we have a new, we will not say a different, presentment of Robert Browning, who is silhouetted in many attitudes. In her unstudied references, as in a mirror, we see the reflection of him as he comes and goes in the privacy of home and in his intercourse with the outside world, at times when he had no thought of sitting for his picture and she no intention of

sketching him for the public eye. To read these letters is almost like looking into her eyes and seeing that image of him which her retina carried. That Mrs. Browning's letters to her friends should ever disparage her husband would not be expected, and doubtless all her words about him are "truth told lovingly"; yet also probably they are the truth, though written by so fond a hand. That she saw deeper into him than anybody else did, and knew him absolutely, gives to her occasional and incidental testimonies an exceptional and final significance.

The attachment of these two poet souls had its beginning by telepathy, or by infection. They contracted mutual admiration from one another's early published writings. Without knowledge to make intention possible they interchanged intellectual samples of themselves as one royal palm tree sends off its vital dust upon the wayward wind to find an unknown other of its kind. Meeting after a while, they discovered that they had been born intimate friends. It is interesting to note his first arrival within her mind's horizon. In 1842 she prints in the *Athenæum* a series of papers on the Greek Christian poets, and is told by somebody that they are read and approved by "Mr. Browning, the poet," who, she hears, "is learned in Greek, especially in the dramatists." In 1843 she is vexed and indignant at the harsh comments of literary critics on Browning's "Blot on the 'Scutcheon," the Athe-

næum charging him with taking pleasure in being enigmatical, which it declared to be a sign of weakness; and she writes to a friend: "I do assure you I never saw him in my life—do not know him even by correspondence—and yet, whether through fellow feeling for Eleusinian mysteries, or through appreciation of his powers, I am very sensitive to the thousand and one stripes with which the assembly of critics doth expound its vocation over him: the Athenæum, for instance, made me quite cross and misanthropical last week." And then follows a most discerning statement, as correct now as it was fifty years ago: "The truth is—and the world should know the truth—it is easier to find a more faultless writer than a poet of equal genius." In January, 1845, she closes a note to a friend with this important intelligence: "I had a letter from Browning, the poet, last night—Browning, the author of 'Paracelsus' and King of the Mystics"; and a few weeks later there is this: "I am getting deeper and deeper into correspondence with Robert Browning, and we are growing to be the truest of friends." In May of that year she writes Mr. Westwood: "Did you persevere with 'Sordello'? I hope so. We may all learn (as poets) much and deeply from it. When you have read it through, then read for relaxation and recompense 'Colombe's Birthday,' which is exquisite. Only 'Pippa Passes' I lean to, or kneel to, with deepest reverence."

In that same May Robert Browning and Elizabeth Barrett met for the first time, and before many months he offered himself and his life to an apparently hopeless invalid, and asked her to be his wife. Of the debate which ensued she herself writes:

I showed him how he was throwing into the ashes his best affections—how the common gifts of youth and cheerfulness were behind me—how I had not strength, even of *heart*, for the ordinary duties of life—everything I told him and showed him. “Look at this—and this—and this,” throwing down all my disadvantages before him. To which he did not answer by a single compliment, but simply that he had not then to choose, and that I might be right or he might be right—he was not there to decide, but that he loved me and should to his last hour. He said that the freshness of youth had passed with him also, and that he had studied the world out of books and seen many women, yet had never loved one until he had seen me; that he knew himself and knew that, if ever so repulsed, he should love me to his last hour—it should be first and last.

No wonder she felt that of her own knowledge she could affirm the truth of Mr. Kenyon’s words, “Robert Browning is great in everything.” No wonder she wrote, after marriage, to a friend:

His genius and almost miraculous attainments are the least things in him, the moral nature being of the very noblest, as all who ever knew him admit. He has had that wide experience of men which ends by throwing the mind back on itself and God. There is nothing incomplete in him, except as all humanity is incomplete. . . . If it were not that I look up to him, we should be too alike to be together, perhaps, but I know my place better than he does, who is too humble.



In 1850, four years after marriage, she writes Miss Mitford:

Ah, you would soon love Robert. You couldn't help it, I'm sure. Do you remember once telling me that "all men are tyrants"?—as sweeping an opinion as that "all men are liars." Well, if you knew Robert, you would make an exception surely.

Similarly, years later, to Miss Blagden:

I am glad Robert was good last night. He tells me he defended Swedenborg, which suggested to me some notion of superhuman virtue on his part. Yes, love him. He is my right "glory," and the "lute and harp" would go for nothing beside him.

Also, later, to Mrs. Jameson:

Ah, yes. You appreciate Robert; you know what is in his poetry. Certainly there is no pretension in *me* toward his profound suggestiveness, and I thank you for knowing and saying it.

Gifted as she was herself, she yet knew that her poetry did not match his in originality, vitality, intensity, sublimity, profundity, or force; and her sense of justice as well as her affection caused her to rejoice with joy unspeakable at every valuable recognition of his extraordinary genius. Within a year after marriage she tells a friend:

I heard of Carlyle's saying the other day that he hoped more from Robert Browning for the people of England than from any other living writer. . . . He loves my husband, I am proud to say.

In 1855, from Paris, she answers Mr. Ruskin:

You please me—O, so much—by the words about my husband. When you wrote to praise my poems of course I had to bear it. I couldn't turn round and say, "Well, and

why don't you praise him, who is worth twenty of me? Praise my second Me as well as my Me proper, if you please." One's forced to be rather decent and modest for one's husband as well as for oneself, even if it's harder. I couldn't pull at your coat to read "Pippa Passes," for instance. I can't now. But you have put him on your shelf, so we have taken courage to send you his new volume, "Men and Women." . . . I consider them on the whole an advance upon his former poems, and am ready to die at the stake for my faith in them.

Commensurate with this proud faith was her indignation at every failure of the British press and public to do him justice. To her sister-in-law, Miss Browning, she writes from Rome as late as 1860, when Robert Browning had been nearly thirty years in print:

Dear Sarianna, I don't complain for myself of an unappreciative public—I have no reason. But, just for *that* cause, I complain more for Robert, only he does not hear me complain. The blindness, deafness, and stupidity of the English public to Robert are amazing. Of course Milsand had "heard his name"! Well, the contrary would have been strange. Robert *is*. All England can't prevent his existence, I suppose. But nobody there, except a small knot of pre-Raffaelite men, pretends to do him justice; while in America he's a power, a writer, a poet—he is read—he lives in the hearts of the people.

And again from Rome to the same relative:

His treatment in England I set down as an infamy—no other word. . . . An English lady of rank here, *an acquaintance of ours* (observe that!), asked the other day the American minister to Italy whether Robert was not an American. The minister answered: "Is it possible that *you* ask me *this*? Why, there is not so poor a village in the United States where they would not tell you that Robert Browning is an Englishman, and that they are very

sorry he is not an American." Very pretty of the American minister—was it not?—and literally true besides.

These letters show us some of the reasons why she honors and reveres him. In one of her letters to Miss Mitford we see that this happy wife, sheltering safe under the shadow of his strong fidelity, is proud of him because he "is faultless and pure in his life," "lives like a woman in abstemiousness," "never touches a cigar even." His uprightness stands tall and erect. His moral integrity is flawless. His honesty uses a microscope and deals scrupulously with life's least items and atoms. Though a poet of lofty level and sublime vision, he walked flat-footed on common, everyday ground, maintaining the alert business habits and careful economies which were necessary to protect their slender means from waste and avoid debt. In the early years of their married life they had so little to live upon that debt would have been easy to fall into, and might, in the eyes of some, have been excusable in poets. But of debt he had an intense abhorrence. In various Florentine letters written by her to familiar friends we catch glimpses of his watchful honesty in practical operation. She writes:

We are still in the slow agonies of furnishing our apartment. You see, being the poorest and most prudent of possible poets, we had to solve the problem of taking our furniture out of our year's income (proceeds of poems and the like), and of not getting into debt. O, I take no credit to myself; I was always in debt in my little way ("small

*immorals*," as Dr. Bowring might call it) before I married; but Robert, though a poet and dramatist by profession, being descended from the blood of all the Puritans, and educated by the strictest of dissenters, has a sort of horror about the dreadful fact of owing five shillings five days, which I call quite morbid in its degree and extent, and which is altogether unpoetical according to the traditions of the world. So we have been dragging in by inches our chairs and tables throughout the summer, and by no means look furnished at this late moment. . . . Robert wouldn't sleep, I think, if an unpaid bill dragged itself by any chance into another week. He says that when people get into "pecuniary difficulties" his sympathies always go with the butchers and bakers, who are waiting for their pay. So we keep out of scrapes, you see.

It seems the Tuscan publishers of a paper called the *Monitore* sent Browning the second time a bill which he had promptly paid when they first rendered it, and she breaks out:

Now join me in admiration of the husband Browning. Isn't he a miracle, whoever else may be? The wife Browning, not to name most other human beings, would certainly have put the *Monitore* receipt into the fire, or, at best, lost it. But up rises the husband Browning and with eyes all fire holds up the receipt like an heroic English rifleman looking ahead to a possible French invasion at the end of a hundred years. Blessed be they who keep receipts. It is a beatitude beyond my reach.

Simple and frugal as their Florentine life for the most part was, it was favorable to her health, had much pleasure and some fruitful work, and was measurably ideal. One of her letters from the seclusion in which they lived has at its end a brief postscript appended by him, "We are happy as two owls in a hole, two toads under a

tree-stump, or any other queer two poking creatures that we let live." And she writes:

I am quite well and strong, and Robert and I go out after tea in a wandering walk to sit in the Loggia and look at the Perseus, or, better still, at the sunsets on the Arno, turning it to pure gold under the bridges. O, that Arno in the sunset, with the moon and evening star standing by. How divine it is!

In industrious periods they worked at poetry from breakfast until 4 P. M., not together but always apart, she in her private study upstairs, he in his below. Once she said in a letter:

Robert is working at a volume of lyrics. We neither of us show our work to each other until it is finished. An artist must, I fancy, either find or *make* a solitude to work in if it is to be good work at all.

One of his recreations was drawing:

After thirteen days' application Robert has produced some quite startling copies of heads. He can't rest from serious work, as I can, in light literature; it wearies him, and there are hours which are on his hands, which is bad both for them and for him. The secret of life is in full occupation, isn't it? This world is not tenable on other terms. So while I rest by lying on the sofa and reading fiction he has a resource in his drawing.

At Rome, in the last winter of her life, he takes to modeling clay, to the temporary neglect of his own particular art. This she regrets but cannot oppose. She says:

Robert is peculiar in his ways of work as a poet. I have struggled a little with him on this point, for I don't think him right—that is to say, it wouldn't be right for me, and I heard the other day that it wouldn't be right for Tennyson. Tennyson is a regular worker, shuts him-

self up daily for so many hours. And we are generally so made that a regular hour is good, even for so uncertain an influence as mesmerism. But Robert waits for inclination—can't do otherwise, he says. [This, it is certain, was only a temporary phase in Browning's life.] Then reading hurts him. As long as I have known him he has not been able to read long at a time. The consequence is that he wants occupation, and active occupation is salvation to him, saves him from ruminating bitter cud, and from the process which I call heating his dear head against the wall till it is bruised, simply because he sees a fly there, magnified by his own two eyes almost indefinitely into some Saurian monster. He has an enormous superfluity of vital energy, and if it isn't employed it strikes its fangs into him. He gets out of spirits as he was at Havre. Nobody understands exactly why—except me who am inside of him and hear him breathe. For the peculiarity of our relation is that, even when he is displeased with me, he thinks aloud with me and can't stop himself. . . . The modeling combines body-work and soul-work, and the more tired he has been, the more his back ached, poor fellow, the more he has exulted and been happy:—says "No, nothing ever made him so happy before"—and also the stouter he has grown and the better he has looked.

Mrs. Browning looked up to her husband because she knew him to be her superior in strength, equipoise, and steadiness. She called herself "one of those weak women who reverence strong men," and seems fully aware that she had gained "somehing of force and freedom by living near the oak." His sound-mindedness, sturdy common sense, and robust earnestness continually appear in his dealing with persons, subjects, and affairs. Frequently his sagacity and healthy wisdom operate to correct the vagaries of her mysticism and morbidness, and

to moderate, as far as possible, her excessive enthusiasms. In the home, as elsewhere, his good sense stood stoutly to its guns in every necessary contention for sanity of views and of morals. He supports his own opinion strongly. The second year after marriage she writes Miss Mitford about some French books which husband and wife have been reading together, and then says:

You ought to hear how we go to single combat, ever and anon, with shield and lance. The greatest quarrel we have had since our marriage, by the way (always excepting my crying conjugal wrong of not eating enough), was brought up by Masson's pamphlet on the Iron Mask and Fouquet. I wouldn't be persuaded that Fouquet was "in it," and so the "anger of my lord waxed hot." To this day he says sometimes: "Don't be cross, Ba! *Fouquet wasn't the Iron Mask after all.*"

On two subjects, both of which fill much space in her letters, they strenuously and always disagreed. These were Louis Napoleon and spiritualism. He never shared her faith in and admiration for the president who destroyed the French republic and made himself emperor. A letter in 1851 from Paris, where they saw the *coup d'état*, says:

Robert and I have had some domestic *émeutes*, because he hates some imperial names. . . . He will tell you that he hates all Buonapartes, past, present, or to come; but then he says that in his self-willed way as a manner of dismissing a subject he won't *think* about—and knowing very well that he doesn't think about, not mistaking a feeling for a reason, not for a moment. That's the difference between women and men.

This difference she herself illustrated by sometimes mistaking her feelings for valid reasons, so falling into irrationality against which always his clear intelligence stood firmly remonstrant. "Prince Hohenstiel Schwangau, Savior of Society," written in Scotland in 1871, ten years after his wife's death, contains his retrospective analysis of Louis Napoleon when that audacious career had closed in overwhelming disaster and that base, rotten empire with all its tarnished tinsel had "gone glimmering through the dream of things that were." But the one subject on which husband and wife differed most sharply was spiritualism, as to which he was a disgusted and vehement disbeliever. The wave of spiritualistic infatuation and experimentation which swept through Europe and America in the fifties affected Mrs. Browning, as well as Mrs. Stowe and others, so that for several years she was of those who, without feeling sure of the honesty and sanity of individual spiritualists, yet thought it possible that some alleged spirit communications might be genuine, and who therefore mingled curiously, hopefully, and more or less credulously with the circles where evidence of the reality of such communication was affirmed to be given. In a manner half explanatory and apologetic for herself Mrs. Browning wrote Miss Mitford:

You know I am rather a visionary, and inclined to knock round at all the doors of the present world to try to get



out, so that I listen with interest to every goblin story of the kind; and, indeed, I hear enough of them just now.

When a circle in Florence tried to make tables tip and spirits rap, but failed, Lytton said their failure was because Robert Browning was playing Mephistopheles, and the spirits disdained to perform in the hostile presence of an arch-skeptic. In 1853 we have in one of her letters the following glimpse of how things were going then and there:

Mr. Lytton gave a reception on the terrace of his villa at Bellosguardo one evening, and we were all bachelors together there, and I made tea, and we ate strawberries and cream, and talked spiritualism. Frederick Tennyson was there, Hiram Powers, and Mr. Villari, an accomplished Sicilian, besides our young host and ourselves. How we "set down" Faraday for his "arrogant and insolent letter" against spiritualism, and what miracles we swore to! O, we are believers here, except Robert, who persists in wearing a coat of respectable skepticism, though I think it is out at elbows and ragged about the skirts. If I am right, none of you will be able to disbelieve much longer. A new law, or a new development of the law, is making way everywhere.

Spiritualists swarmed on every side, and Browning, pretty much alone in his circle, "had to hold them all at bay," which he did with his accustomed decision, energy, and directness. Now and then he exploded and stormed furiously up and down the house in wrath because of deceivers and deceived who were fooling his wife with lies and illusions. To this conflict we owe that rare piece of shrewd dissection and analysis,

"Sludge the Medium," the real subject of which was D. D. Hume, the arch-impostor.

"Husband, lover, nurse, Robert has been to me," wrote this delicate woman after five years of married life, and with equal truth might have repeated the same words to the angels when at the end she passed from his arms to the heavens. Richly endowed with quick and generous sympathies, this gentle, healthy man was the ever-ready natural nurse of weakness and suffering. Often in their fifteen years together he carried her, like a baby, in his arms in and out of the house, upstairs and down, from carriages to railway stations, and elsewhere. In her letters her physical weakness, often affecting her spirits, is a prominent feature of most of her years, as when she writes to Miss Haworth:

I know how foolish and morbid I must seem to you. So I am made, and I can't help my idiosyncrasies. . . . Forgive my poor brittle body which shakes and breaks.

At the Baths of Lucca in 1857, in hot exhausting August weather, we see Robert Browning watching many days and sitting up eight nights to nurse young Robert Lytton, who is very ill with fever, and, expecting to die, is "inclined to talk of divine things, of the state of his soul and God's love, and to hold this life but slackly." For several years at Florence and Siena, Browning watches with patient affection over Walter Savage Landor, past eighty years of age, unreasonable, irritable, and difficult to manage.

Mrs. Browning tells the story in various letters. "The poor old lion, Landor, appeared one day at our door of Casa Guidi to take refuge with us, being sorely buffeted by his family at Fiesole, broken-hearted and in wrath, with an oath on his soul never to return to them." To this crotchety old man, who had "quarreled with nearly everybody in and out of England," Robert Browning became a sort of guardian, attending to all his wants and comforts. Landor "has excellent, generous, affectionate impulses, but the impulses of a tiger now and then." At times he throws a dinner that doesn't suit him out of the window, or dashes a plate on the floor when he dislikes what is on it. He "has the most beautiful sea-foam of a beard, all in a curl and white bubblement of beauty." "Robert amuses me by talking of Landor's 'gentleness and sweetness.' A most courteous and refined gentleman he is, of course, and very affectionate to Robert (as he surely ought to be), but of self-restraint he has not a grain, and of suspiciousness many grains. The contadini at whose house he is now lodging have been already accused of opening his desk. Still, on that occasion, as on others, Robert succeeded in soothing him, and the poor old lion is quiet, on the whole, roaring softly to beguile the time, in Latin alcaics against his wife and Louis Napoleon. He laughs carnivorously when I tell him that one of these days he will have to write an ode in honor of the emperor,

to please me." "I call him our adopted son. You didn't know I had a son eighty-six and more." "His genius gives him a claim to gratitude from all artists, at least, and I must say my Robert, who says he owes more to Landor as a writer than to any other contemporary, has generously paid the debt. Robert's goodness to him has been quite apostolical. And think of the effect of a goodness which can quote at every turn to an author something from that author's own book! Isn't that more bewitching than other goodnesses? At present Landor is very fond of him, but I am quite prepared to have the old lion turn against us as he has turned against Forster, who has been so devoted for years and years. . . . Robert's office is difficult, and I tell him he must be prepared for an outbreak and a printed statement that he (Robert), instigated by his wicked wife, has attempted to poison him (Landor) slowly. Such an extraordinary union of great literary gifts and incapacity of will has seldom surprised the world."

Twenty years of his wife's letters show Robert Browning to have been, as Anne Thackeray Ritchie writes with almost worshipful affection, "above all a poet, a good man, a great genius."

## OTHER PEOPLE IN MRS. BROWNING'S LETTERS

MR. RUSKIN once wrote: "Mrs. Browning's 'Aurora Leigh' is, as far as I know, the greatest poem which the century has produced in any language." Without agreeing in the least with this opinion, it seems fair to say that views and criticisms on the characters, actions, and productions of numerous notable persons from a woman whose work John Ruskin in his prime could so eulogize are likely to be interesting and valuable, especially when found scattered about in private letters—frank, impromptu expressions given in the freedom and candor of friendly correspondence. No small part of the teeming and palpitant life of Mrs. Browning's letters consists in the impressions made upon this acutely sensitive, utterly sincere, and intensely earnest woman by the various celebrities, mostly though not exclusively literary people, whom she knew by personal intercourse or by correspondence or by trustworthy report. Because of her native country and native tongue the greater part are English; by reason of her long residence and interest in Italy some are Italians; by reason of the warm and early welcome given in America to her poetry a number are Americans; while by reason of her occasional periods of residence

in Paris a few are French. Probably no objection will be made to our exhibiting and advertising here the richness of the volumes which hold the confidential thoughts of one of the most gifted of women as she poured them out freely through thirty years of letters.

She was thirty years old when she had her first sight of Wordsworth and several other notables and wrote:

I was not at all disappointed in Wordsworth, although perhaps I should not have singled him from the multitude as a great man. There is a *reserve* even in his countenance which does not lighten as Landor's does, whom I saw the same evening. His eyes have more meekness than brilliancy, and in his slow, even articulation there is rather the solemnity of *truth* itself than the animation and energy of those who seek for it. As to my being quite at ease when I spoke to him, how could you ask such a question? I trembled in both soul and body. But he was very kind and sat near me and talked to me and recited a translation by Carey of a sonnet of Dante's—and altogether it was quite a dream! Landor too—Walter Savage—in whose hands the ashes of antiquity burn again, gave me two Greek epigrams he had lately written, and talked brilliantly and prominently until my brother abused him afterward for *ambitious* singularity and affectation. But it was very interesting. And dear Miss Mitford too! And Mr. Raymond, a great Hebraist and the author of "A Cure for a Heartache." I never walked in the skies before, and perhaps never shall again when so many stars are out!

Mrs. Browning made frequent efforts to convert her friend Mr. H. S. Boyd to something like her own admiration of Wordsworth's poetry. Thus she writes:

As to your "words of fire" about Wordsworth, if I had but a cataract at command I would try to quench them. Do you remember his grand ode upon "Childhood"—worth, to my apprehension, just twenty of Dryden's "St. Cecilia's Day"—his sonnet upon Westminster Bridge, his lyric on a lark in which the lark swells and exults, and the many noble and glorious passages of his "Excursion"? You must not blame me for estimating Wordsworth *at his height*, and, on the other hand, I confess to you that he is frequently heavy and dull. Wordsworth's spirit has worked a good work, and has freed into the capacity of work other noble spirits. He took the initiative in a great poetic movement, and is to be praised, not only for what he has done, but for what he has enabled his age to do. For the rest, Byron has more passion and intensity, Shelley more fancy and music, Coleridge could see further into the unseen and was the grander genius, and not one of those poets has insulted his own genius by the production of whole poems such as I could name of Wordsworth's, the vulgarity of which is childish and the childishness vulgar. Still, the wings of his genius are wide enough to cover its feet with their shadow, and our gratitude should be stronger than our critical acumen. Yes, I will be "a blind admirer of Wordsworth." He was a great poet to me always; and always, while I have a soul for poetry, will be so. I do not understand the Greek meters as well as you do, but I understand Wordsworth's genius better. He is a philosophical and Christian poet, with depths in his soul to which poor Byron could never reach. Do be candid.

Remarking that she does not know where Wordsworth was educated, she expresses her opinion that "Apollo taught him under the laurels, while all the Muses looked through the boughs."

Carlyle pleased the Brownings by a letter which said, "Not for years has a marriage occurred in my private circle in which I so heartily

rejoice as in yours." After he had journeyed with them from England to Paris she writes:

He left a deep impression on me. It is difficult to conceive of a more interesting human soul. All the bitterness is love with the point reversed. He seems to me to have a profound sensibility—so profound and turbulent that it unsettles his general sympathies. Do you guess what I mean, or is it as dark as my writings are said to be? We met Carlyle once at Mr. Forster's in London, and found him in great force, particularly in the damnatory clauses.

Tennyson, who was not redundantly magnanimous and gracious toward the Brownings, received from them unaffected admiration and generous offers of affection. Her letters hold such recognitions as these:

Tennyson is a great poet. He can think, he can feel, and his language is highly expressive, characteristic, and harmonious. He thrills me sometimes to the end of my fingers, as only a true great poet can. . . . With all my admiration of him I would gladly find in him more exaltation and a broader clasping of truth. Still, it is not possible to have so much beauty without a certain portion of truth, the position of the Utilitarians being true in the inverse. But I think as I did of "uses" and "responsibilities," and do hold that the poet is a preacher and must look to his doctrine. Perhaps Tennyson will grow more solemn, like the sun, as his day goes on. In the meantime we have the noble "Two Voices" and, among other grand intimations of a teaching power, certain stanzas "To J. S." which very deeply affected me; the lines beginning,

"The wind, that beats the mountain, blows  
More softly round the open wold."

Take away the last stanzas, which should be applied more definitely to the *body*, or else be cut away altogether as a lie against eternal verity, and the poem stands as one of



the finest of monodies. The nature of human grief never surely was more tenderly intimated or touched—it brought tears to my eyes. Tennyson is not a Christian poet, up to this time, but let us listen and hear his next songs. He is one of God's singers, whether he knows it or not. We have read Tennyson's "Princess," and I am disappointed. What woman will tell the great poet that Mary Wollstonecraft herself never dreamt of setting up collegiate states, proctordoms, and the rest, which is a worn-out plaything in the hands of one sex already, and need not be *transferred* in order to be proved ridiculous? As for the poetry, beautiful in parts, he never seems to me to come up to his own highest mark, in the rhythm especially. The old blank verse of Tennyson was a divine thing, but this new—mounted for certain critics—may please *them* better than it pleases *me*. Still, the man is Tennyson, take him for all and all, and I never shall forgive whatever princesses of my sex may have ill treated him. What you tell me interests me as everything about him must. I like to think of him digging gardens—cabbages and all. At the same time, what he says about the public "*hating* poetry" is certainly not a fit word for Tennyson. Perhaps no true poet, having claims upon attention *solely* through his poetry, has attained so certain a success with such short delay. Instead of being pelted (as nearly every true poet has been) he stands already on a pedestal, and is recognized as a master spirit not by a coterie, but by the great public. If he isn't satisfied, I think he is wrong. Divine poet as he is, and no laurel being too leafy for him, yet he must be an unreasonable man, and not an understander of the growth of laurel trees and the nature of a reading public. I have read "In Memoriam." It is full of pathos and beauty and has gone to my heart and soul. All I wish away is the marriage hymn at the end, and *that* for every reason I wish away—it's a discord in the music. The monotony is a part of the position—the sea is monotonous and so is lasting grief. Who that has suffered has not felt wave after wave break dully against one rock, till brain and heart, with all their radiances, seemed lost in a single shadow? Tennyson stands higher

by reason of this book. What he lacked, in the opinion of many, was an earnest personality and direct purpose. In this last poem he appeals direct from heart to heart, as from his own to the universal heart, and we all feel him nearer to us. The winding up of "Maud" is magnificent, full of power, and there are beautiful, thrilling bits before you get so far. Still, there is an appearance of labor in the early part; the language is rather incrustated by skill than spontaneously blossoming, and the rhythm is not always happy. The poet seems to aim at more breadth and freedom, which he attains, but at the expense of his characteristic delicious music. The Laureate, being in London for three or four days from the Isle of Wight, spent two of them with us, dined with us, smoked with us, opened his heart to us, and ended by reading "Maud" to us from beginning to end and going away at half past two in the morning. If I had had a heart to spare, certainly he would have won mine. He is captivating with his frankness, confidingness, and unexampled *naïveté*. Think of his stopping in "Maud" every now and then, exclaiming, "There's a wonderful touch! That's very tender! How beautiful that is!" Yes, and it *was* wonderful, tender, beautiful, and he read exquisitely in a voice like an organ, rather music than speech.

Of a precocious poet who made a brief sensation the letters have such notice as the following:

Alexander Smith has noble stuff in him; a true poet in opulence of imagery, more imagery than verity, more color than form; defective so far (he is said to be very young) in the intellectual part of poetry. His images are flowers thrown to him by the gods, beautiful and fragrant, but having no root either in Enna or Olympus. There is no unity, and holding together, no reality properly so called, no thinking of any kind. Tennyson says of him, "He has fancy without imagination." Still, it is difficult to say at the dawn what may be written at noon. He may attain, as he ripens, more clearness of outline and depth of intention. Certainly he is very rich and full of color.

Of Charles Kingsley there is this brief mention:

Mr. Kingsley, the "Christian Socialist," author of "Alton Locke," "Yeast," etc., impressed me most agreeably. I like and admire him. He is original and earnest, full of a genial and almost tender kindness which is delightful. Wild and theoretical in many ways he is of course, but I believe he could not be otherwise than good and noble, let him say or dream what he will. "Manly," do you say? But I am not fond of praising men by calling them *manly*. I hate and detest a masculine man. *Humanly* bold, brave, true, direct, Mr. Kingsley is—a moral cordiality and an original intellect uniting in him.

Ruskin's "Modern Painters" evokes such comments as these:

A gifted but eccentric writer! Very eloquent he is, and true views he takes of art in the abstract, true and elevating. It is in the application of connective logic that he breaks away from one violently. Very vivid, graphic, full of sensibility, but inconsequent in some of the reasoning, and rather flashy than full in the metaphysics. Robert, who knows a good deal about art, could agree with him only by snatches, and we, both of us, standing before a very expressive picture of Domenichino's, wondered how he could blaspheme against so great an artist. Still, he is no ordinary man, and for a critic to be so much a poet is a great thing.

To Mr. Ruskin, when he had lauded, extravagantly as she thought, her poems, she wrote:

Not being a mere critic, but half critic and half poet, you may be encumbered sometimes by the burning imagination in you, may be apt, when you turn the light of your countenance on a thing, to see the thing lighted up as a matter of course, just as we, when we carried torches into the Vatican, were not perfectly clear how much we brought to that wonderful Demosthenes, folding the marble round

him in its thousand folds—how much we brought and how much we received. Was it the sculptor or the torchbearer who most produced the effect? And like doubts I have had of you, I confess. . . . You don't mistake by your heart, through loving, but you exaggerate by your imagination, through glorifying.

Mrs. Browning once characterized Harriet Martineau as "the most manlike woman in the three kingdoms—in the best sense of man—a woman gifted with admirable fortitude, as well as exercised in high logic, a woman of sensibility and of imagination certainly, but apt to carry her reason unbent wherever she sets her foot, given to utilitarian philosophy and the habit of logical analysis"; and yet strangely, though not to our surprise, these letters show us Miss Martineau, at intervals through the years, as dying at one time of cancer, then claiming to be cured of this by mesmerism, then carried away completely as a believer in clairvoyance and spiritualism, then repudiating mesmerism, and falling at times into loudly declared atheism, which again she several times renounced. Little did Harriet Martineau's boasted "logic," "reason," and "manlike mind" avail to give intellectual dignity, consistency, poise, or reasonableness to her life. A not inappropriate place for her statue would be in a museum of classical art along with the marble figures of Juno, Diana, Minerva, and other goddesses of polytheism, although she was rather too vacillating to stand safely steady on a pagan pedestal or any other.

"Vanity Fair" makes this impression:

Very clever, very effective, but cruel to human nature; a painful book, and not the pain that purifies and exalts! Partial truths, after all, and those not wholesome. But I had no idea that Thackeray had intellectual force for such a book; the power is considerable.

Of Samuel Rogers, young and bold, light-hearted and witty, at eighty-three, this is written:

It is a fine thing when the light burns so clear, away down in the socket. I, who am not an admirer of his "Pleasures of Memory," do admire this perpetual youth and untired energy. Then there are other noble characteristics about this Rogers. A man said the other day: "Rogers hates me, I know; he is always making bitter speeches about me, and yesterday he said so and so. *But*, if I were in distress, there is one man in the world to whom I would go without hesitation, at once and as to a brother, and that man is Rogers." If he is harsh sometimes in his words, he is always generous in his deeds. He makes an epigram on a man and then gives him a thousand pounds.

After hearing Chalmers, Mrs. Browning wrote:

His sermon was on a text whose extreme beauty would diffuse itself into any sermon preached upon it—"God is love." His eloquence was very great, and his views noble and grasping. I expected much from his imagination, but not so much from his knowledge. It was truer to Scripture than I was prepared for, although there seemed to me some *want* on the subject of the work of the Holy Spirit on the heart, which work we cannot dwell upon too emphatically. He "worketh in us to will and to do."

A few Americans appear in Mrs. Browning's Italian letters:

Mrs. Stowe has just arrived and called this morning. I like her better than I thought I should—that is, I find more refinement in voice and manner—no rampant American-

isms. Very simple and gentle, with a sweet voice; undesirous of shining or posing as it seemed to me. Never did lioness roar more softly; and the temptations of a sudden enormous popularity should be estimated, in doing her full justice. She is nice-looking too, and there's something strong and copious and characteristic in her dusky, wavy hair. For the rest, the brow has not very large capacity; and the mouth wants something both in frankness and sensitiveness, I should say. Her books are not so much to me, I confess, as is the fact that she above all women (yes, and men) of the age has moved the world—and *for good*. We were both of us charmed with her simplicity and earnestness, and I who had looked for what one usually finds in women was startled into much admiration and sympathy by finding in her a largeness and fearlessness of thought which, coming out of a clerical and Puritan *cul-de-sac*, and combined with the most devout and reverent emotions, is really fine. In Florence Mr. Powers, the sculptor, is our chief friend and favorite, a most charming, straightforward, genial American, as simple as the man of genius he has proved himself needs to be. O, those great burning eyes of his, eyes like a wild Indian's, so black and full of light. You would scarcely wonder if they clave the marble without the help of his hands. Miss Hosmer, the young American sculptress, is a great pet of mine and of Robert's. She emancipates the eccentric life of a perfectly "emancipated female" from all shadow of blame by the purity of hers. She lives here all alone (at twenty-two); dines and breakfasts at the *cafés* precisely as a young man would; works from six o'clock in the morning till night, as a great artist must, and this with an absence of pretension and a simplicity of manners which accord rather with the childish dimples in her rosy cheeks than with her broad forehead and high aims. . . . She is a daring horsewoman and has been thrown thirty times. Mr. Story, the sculptor and poet, represents Hawthorne as not silent only by shyness, but by inaptitude; a man, it seems, who does not open out socially with his most intimate any more than with strangers. It isn't his *way* to converse. That has been characteristic of some

men of genius before him. As for getting anything from him on the subject of spiritualist manifestations, his opinions are expressed in the "Blithedale Romance." He evidently thinks them a sort of scurvy spirits, good to be slighted because of their disreputableness. Theodore Parker removed from Rome to Florence in an extremity of ill health, and died there. There was something high and noble about the man—though he was not deep in proportion.

Mrs. Browning was an intense democrat, in keen sympathy with struggling peoples everywhere, loving liberty and hating slavery of every sort. In revolutionists and patriots she had an earnest interest.

Mazzini came to see us the other day, with that pale, spiritual face of his and those intense eyes full of melancholy. I was thinking, while he sat there, on what Italian turf he would lie at last with a bullet in his heart, or perhaps with a knife in his back, for to one of those ends it will surely come. . . . He is a noble and unwise man. Unfortunately, the epithets are compatible. Kossuth is neither very noble nor very wise. I have heard and *felt* a great deal of harm of him. The truth is not in him. And when a patriot lies like a Jesuit, what are we to say or do?

Eight years later she had an altered opinion of Mazzini: "He deserves what I should be sorry to inflict. He is a man without conscience."

Great was her love for Italy and her admiration of Louis Napoleon for the aid he lent to the Italian cause. Of that struggle the chief hero was Garibaldi, especially in his Neapolitan campaign. In 1860:

We are all talking and dreaming Garibaldi just now in great anxiety. Scarcely since the world was a world has

there been such a feat of arms. All modern heroes grow pale before him. It was necessary, however, for us all even here, and at Turin just as in Paris, to be ready to disavow him. The whole good of central Italy was hazarded by it. If it had not been success, it would have been an evil beyond failure. The enterprise was forlorn rather than a forlorn hope. The hero, if he had perished, would scarcely have been sure of his epitaph even.

### But a little later:

Our poor Garibaldi, hero as he is, and an honest hero, is in truth the weakest and most malleable of men, and has become at last the mere mouthpiece of the Mazzinians. If the Bourbons' fall had not been a little delayed, North and South Italy would have broken in two.

### The day after Cavour's death, in 1861:

I can scarcely command voice to name Cavour. That great soul which meditated and made Italy has gone to the diviner country. If tears or blood could have saved him to us, he should have had mine. A hundred Garibaldis for such a man! May God save Italy!

Concerning an Irish leader, one letter to friends in England contains this:

You are very vainglorious, I suppose, about O'Connell; but although I was delighted at the reversal by the House of Lords of his conviction for conspiracy, a victory for justice and constitutional law, yet he never was a hero of mine; if he had been, I should have been quite ashamed of him for being so unequal to his grand position as was demonstrated by the speech from the balcony. Such poetic sublimity in the position, and such prose in the speech! He has not the stuff in him of which heroes are made. There is a thread of cotton everywhere crossing the silk.

In Paris, in 1858, she saw Charles Sumner, who, for cure of the effects of Bully Brooks's



bludgeon, was passing through the burning torture under the hands of French surgeons.

Do you remember the Jesuit's agony in "The Wandering Jew"? It is practically that. Exposed to the living coal for seven weeks and the burns taking six weeks to heal. Mr. Sumner refused chloroform and suffered intensely. Of course he is not able to stir for some time after the operation, and can't read or sleep for the pain. Now he is just "healed," and is allowed to travel for two months, after which he is to return and be burned again. Isn't it a true martyrdom? What is feared is paralysis, or at best nervous infirmity for life, as the result of the blows of that savage.

Not overpatriotic as an English woman was Mrs. Browning, but often deeply displeased with England's attitude and action in matters at home and abroad.

Charles Tennyson married an Italian, but is intensely English, nevertheless, as expatriated Englishmen generally are. Robert's patriotism grows and deepens in exact proportion to the distance he goes away from England. It is not so with me; I am very cosmopolitan, and am tired of the self-deification of the English nation at the expense of all others. We have some noble advantages over the rest of the world, but it is not all advantage. Our "representative system" is nonrepresentative, and socially we are much behind most foreign peoples. And of continental affairs we understand nothing in England. As Cousin said, long ago, we are "insular" of understanding.

In 1855 she writes:

O, the Crimea! How full of despair and horror! The results, however, will be good if we are induced to come down from the English pedestal of self-glorification and learn that our close, stifling, corrupt system gives no scope for healthy and effective organization anywhere. We are oligarchic in all things from our Parliament to our army. According to the last marriage statistics thirty per cent

of the male population signed with the *mark* only. London is at once the largest and ugliest city in Europe. If we cannot fight righteous and necessary battles, we must leave our place as a nation and be satisfied with making pins. . . . I begin to think that nothing will do for England but a good revolution, and a "besom of destruction" used dauntlessly. We are getting up our vainglories again, smoothing and spreading our peacock's plumes. . . . The English are a peculiar people. They think that their worst is better than the best of exterior nations, that God made only the English, that over the rest of the world he has cast out his shoe. Truth, generosity, nobleness of mind and will, these things are imagined not to exist beyond the influence of the Times newspaper and the Saturday Review. . . . A clever English woman (married to a Frenchman) told Robert the other day that she believed in "a special hell for the Anglo-Saxon race on account of its hypocrisy."

In January, 1861, Mrs. Hooker, an American, gave a ball in Rome, and Mrs. Browning wrote:

So you see our Americans can dance even while their republic goes to pieces. I think I would not do so. Not that I despair of America—God forbid! If the North will be faithful to its conscience, there will be only an increase of greatness after a few years, even though it may rain blood betwixt then and now. Mr. Story, the sculptor, takes it all very quietly. He would be content to let the South go and to accept the isolation of the North as final. "We would be better off without the South," says he. I don't agree with him; I think the unity of the State should be asserted with a strong hand, and the South be forced to pay taxes and submit to law.

Such are some of the opinions held by the greatest of poetesses, foremost of English women in her day, and dearest of women to the Italy where she lived her best years, died, and lies buried.

## HEATED MACHINERY

THE train that will not stop for a hot box is liable to burn up by the friction of its motion long before it reaches the natural end of its journey. A group of four Newark pastors stood on the steps of the City Hall, whither they had gone on business connected with the Law and Order League. In response to a query, one of them told how much work he was doing by day and by night, and planning to do. To him his interlocutor said: "You are sinning against yourself; you are burning your candle at both ends." The unheeding man so warned was dead of overwork within two years. He managed to consume his candle in half-time. It was a brilliant success, but soon burned out.

A retired manufacturer, watching the strife from which he has withdrawn, tells of five business men, under forty-four, in the circle of his personal acquaintance, who within one year died of brain or kidney disease, or went to the madhouse, all from overwork. A strong man, under forty, was accustomed during the four months of winter to leave home at 6 A. M., and return from business at 11 P. M. In about three years his body grew so tired that it retired from business to a quiet place under the sod, where it is now taking a long rest.

These instances are fair samples of what is going on in the lives of thousands, along all lines of activity, in the burning intensity and fierce ordeals especially of urban life.

When Frank James, the notorious bandit, came out of hiding and surrendered himself to the governor of Missouri he explained that he was tired of a life of taut nerves, of day-riding and night-riding, of constant listening for foot-falls, rustling leaves, cracking twigs, and creaking doors; tired of the saddle and the cartridge belt. The life of many a better man than he is of equal tension; nerves keyed as taut as the strings of Ole Bull's violin; watching against ambush, surprises, disaster in the deceitfulness of business and subtlety of competition; his mind kept in the saddle and on the road until, even when he lays his head on his pillow and longs to sleep, it keeps galloping on down the sleepless eternity of the uneasy night; tantalized and tossed along the edge of slumber, like a sun-scorched rider who skirts a shady forest which he cannot find a way to enter; and when at last he dozes, dreams he is Mazeppa bound helpless on the back of a flying wild horse. Such a man, spending his first night at a mountain house where it was customary to call the guests to see the sunrise, was startled from his half-sleep by the porter's sharp rap on his door, and cried, "What's the matter?" "Day's breakin', sah." "You don't say! what are his assets and liabilities?"

The poor man had not yet pulled his mind out of Broadway. He needed to telegraph down to have his brains sent up to him by the next train.

Large numbers of comparatively young men are aging fast with care and overwork. In what ought to be their buoyant prime they find themselves looking wearily on life with the miserable interrogatory, "What is all this worth?" realizing with Milton's Lucifer that to be weak is to be wretched, especially when weakness must drag on at toil; and feeling like the old woman in the poorhouse, who, when asked by one of the guardians, "Betty, they tell me you are a hundred years old; is it true?" replied, "The good Lord only knows, sir; but I feel a thousand."

When the machinery heats and swells its bearings it is time to stop and give it a chance to cool. Instead of this, some men pull out the throttle and let on steam for higher velocity, resorting to tonics and stimulants when what they need is rest, lashing the jaded and groaning faculties that already beg for mercy.

We do not need anyone to tell us, after the fashion of a recent author, of a strange land at the south pole, where there are strikes for longer hours and more work. We know places nearer by where men are striking for eighteen hours rather than eight, and wishing they were general passenger agents in charge of the time-tables of the solar system, so they might revise the schedule of the earth's revolution and put more hours into

a day. The Independent said, when John Swinton stopped publishing his paper, that he had worked on it about twenty-five hours a day. We all know the man, type of a class who, though he might, will never take any vacation until some time he takes a day off for the purpose of attending his own funeral. Apparently there are men who would rather die worth a million than live worth fifty thousand. Hawthorne said, "When we are dead we Americans begin to enjoy ourselves," from which one would infer Hawthorne to have been a national universalist.

There is small chance to deny that American life, by reason of something in our blood, climate, and other stimulating conditions, is unequaled in rush and excitement. Herbert Spencer tells his countrymen: "We English have had too much of the gospel of work; it is time to learn the gospel of relaxation." But visiting Englishmen are impressed with the still greater intensity of our life. Archdeacon Farrar said, in 1885, "In America I have been most struck with the enormous power, energy, vivacity, and speed in every department of exertion." Emily Faithful came from the sobering influence of London fogs and told us that our climate is too electric, sparkling, exhilarating, exasperating, and our life too strenuous, exacting, and driving.

An English physician says, "American city life requires nerves of steel to endure its terrible strain, and produces a highly nervous and dys-

peptic type of men and women." Another Englishman says of us: "Their life is feverish. They are rapid in everything. They live every moment an intense, daring, crowded, reckless, and restless life." Oliver Wendell Holmes asserts that, whether the chemists know it or not, there is a double proportion of oxygen in the New World air. Colonel T. W. Higginson once wrote: "Nature said, some years since, 'Thus far the English is my best race, but we have had Englishmen enough; put in one more drop of nervous fluid and make the Americans.'" Matthew Arnold, in the lofty exercise of his universal censorship, rebuked Higginson for this, but himself said: "Undoubtedly the Americans, both men and women, are highly nervous. A great Paris physician informs us that he notes a new and distinct form of nervous disease produced in American women by worry about servants." Arnold attributed our supersensitive nervousness to overwork, frantic hurry, want of healthful exercise, injudicious diet, and a most trying climate.

Wall Street epitomizes its experience in the saying, "Ten years is a lifetime." A prominent city physician expresses the thought which is forced upon him thus: "Men no longer die; they kill themselves."

In another land and time a man was called more precious than the gold of Ophir. A singular country it must be where a horse is more valu-

able than a man. I fear that strange land is not far away. One hundred thousand dollars has been paid for a horse here, and the palmiest days of man-selling never saw such a price obtained for human live-stock. A manufacturer of heavy goods loads his trucks with four or five tons each, but orders his truckmen never to drive the big Norman horses off a walk. This makes slow work for long cartings, but is found to be profitable economy in the long run. It pays to keep the huge animals from straining themselves. With himself the manufacturer deals less mercifully, for he keeps extending his business, takes on an enormous load of work and care, and drives himself uphill at a gallop, saying, "In such sharply competitive times as these a man must keep a little ahead of the world, or quit and retire." Several serious warnings have intimated the probability of his retiring under a form of order known to the medical profession as paralysis. If shortly the cemetery hill-slope bears a new monument, what satisfaction will it be to his disembodied spirit to observe in distant city streets his much-prized and long-surviving truck-horses still being driven, in accordance with his orders, on a walk?

The difficulty about the lesson which lies in solution in this discussion is that they who need it most will heed it least, will not even read it. One vividly clear conclusion is that no nation has so much at stake as ours in preserving one



day in seven as a holy Sabbath of rest, free from secular activity and excitements. President Benjamin Harrison, in the White House, said he would die if it were not for Sunday; on which day he would not have his mail brought to him, nor so much as read even a friendly letter.

De Tocqueville makes a beautiful picture of us: "On Sunday the American, laying aside the passions which agitate his life and the ephemeral interests which engross it, strays into an ideal world where all is great, eternal, pure"; and in "the solemn calm of meditation" the soul "resumes possession of itself." When was this picture taken?

## ABOUT CUPIDS

CUPIDS are sly little fellows with wings, who carry bows and arrows and hunt human hearts. I could tell a story or two about them, if only anybody would be warned against their craftiness; for they are wickeder than Bret Harte's "Heathen Chinees." Ladies would rather play with them than pet lapdogs, but they are more dangerous, though they never get hydrophobia. I went into a studio in Rome one day, and saw a rural young Cupid, with a face of cherubic beauty, sitting on a stump. He was marble, it is true, but since Pygmalion there is an art of making such things live; and a magic power of compelling love made this Cupid alive to me. His flesh was delicately tinted, hair golden, lips and eyes bright-colored. The rogue was holding a veil over his head, face, shoulders, and wings; had his arrows behind him, and was watching the world through his thin gauze as if innocently supposing he had securely hid himself and his weapons, and might see without being seen. Foolish fellow, his trick was as transparent as his veil.

Another Cupid was playing a similar ruse. He lay on a soft embroidered cushion, a luxurious Cupid he, feigning sleep, and looking entirely too harmless. I saw that his deceitful eyelids

were slightly parted, just enough for him to see through the lashes, and the rascal had his bow in his right hand under the fringe, while the left arm, thrown so carelessly over his head, concealed a quiver full of arrows. His attitude said, "I'm asleep, don't be afraid," but in spite of himself the mischief frolicked openly around his lips, as he thought of his cunning trick. I knew he was a cheat, so I wrote under his cushion, "Don't trust him, he's not asleep."

Cupid playing 'possum is funny to see, but a disheartened Cupid is a gloomy sight. I saw one of these Liliputian Nimrods who looked sick and disenchanted, mad at himself and the world, and weary of the charms of the chase. Either he had failed, or else the game was good for nothing when he brought it down. In disgust he had broken his arrows, smashed his bow, and with a bankrupt air said he was "going to quit the business." I fear he drowned his despondent self in the nearest stream. If you could find on the bank where he threw himself in, his snapped arrows and broken bow, they would bring a high price.

Go look for them!

One bright day an enterprising Cupid thought he would go abroad to see what he could find. He accoutered for the hunt, tightening his bow, grinding his arrows sharp, smoothing their feathers to make them fly straight, and at last swinging his quiver over his shoulder. Thus

equipped, away into the world he went. Soon espying a Heart that had a proud way of bounding along, his cupidity was excited, and he said, "Here is something that is worth my time if I can only catch it."

Forthwith he gave chase. But it was a wild thing, and swift as he could run with the help of his wings, he had difficulty in coming near it. Yet, thinking to himself, the best game is always shy, he pursued till he came within range. Arrow after arrow he shot at it then, but every one missed. At last he got point-blank aim and felt sure of hitting, but, to his utter dismay, the game went off unhurt. Said he: "This is very strange. What kind of a Heart can that be? Is it a god, invulnerable, or dipped like Achilles in the Styx? Is it of flesh or stone? It must wear armor under its dress."

Puzzled and chagrined at being baffled, out of breath, and panting hard, he sat down under a rosebush by a brook, to meditate strategies, and plot things subtle and savage. Being weary, he presently lay down on a spray-sprinkled bed of moss there in the woods and shut his eyes. There the bees sang this airy little Love asleep with their drowsy hum, the butterfly fanned him with her brilliant wings, the birds pecked wonderingly at his wing feathers, so like their own, a white rabbit watched him with her soft pink eyes, and the wild honeysuckle sent its sweet breath to him by the kindness of the breeze.

This Cupid, in his sleep, had visions of happy hunting-grounds and whole strings of captured Hearts, as a wild Indian in his warpaint dreams of bringing home his belt full of scalps. He was waked by a headlong little humming-bird, that thrust its tiny bill between his red lips, mistaking his mouth for a half-opened flower, and meaning to suck the honey of his breath.

Refreshed by his rest, and still angry at his shameful failure to catch the Heart he had pursued, he rubbed the sleep from his eyes, and started afresh, hoping to rediscover his game.

It chanced that another Cupid was abroad also, that day, a famously successful hunter of Hearts. He was sitting complacent and satisfied, on a broken capital, the sole trace of an ancient palace and especially of a colonnade, in which lovers long ago walked. His bow and arrows lay on the ground, and he was remembering old victories and planning new ones. He smacked his lips, as much as to say: "Now, I'm a dear little fellow. What mischief shall I do next?" He sat holding his right heel in his left hand, his chin rested in his right hand, and his elbow on his knee. Him our unfortunate Cupid comes up with, tells his vexing story of disappointment, and asks his help. He assents, and together they go on to hunt for the elusive, invulnerable, enchanted Heart, which seemed to have a charm against the hurt of arrows. Very shortly, to their surprise, they find it asleep at the foot of

a tree, where it had lain down to sleep, all unsuspecting. The sight of his prey enrages the long-baffled Cupid, and he stands over it sweetly nursing his wrath. In a passion he vows he will crush it, and actually lifts his cruel foot to stamp it into the ground; but his brother Cupid is tender-hearted, never having been embittered or provoked by failure; and protesting against such clumsy brutality, he seizes our rash, violent, little hunter, and grappling with him, says, "No, you sha'n't." "Yes, I will, too," answers the mad one. "Let me alone. Hang it all, haven't I had trouble enough? Hands off, I *will* crush it." And the last I saw of them, they still stood wrestling over that poor Heart; and I do not know whether the angry Cupid crushed it, or waked it and took it prisoner, and carried it home and kept it in a cage.

This is what Leigh Hunt says he did with Cupid:

T'other day, as I was twining  
Roses for a crown to drive in,  
What, of all things, midst the heap,  
Should I light on, fast asleep,  
But the little desperate elf,  
The tiny traitor—Love himself!  
By the wings I picked him up  
Like a bee, and in a cup  
Of my wine I plunged and sank him;  
And what d'ye think I did? I drank him!  
Faith I thought him dead. Not he!  
There he lives with tenfold glee;  
And now this moment, with his wings  
I feel him tickling my heartstrings.

## LITERATURE





## THE AUTHOR OF "RAB AND HIS FRIENDS"

WHEN Mr. J. T. Fields, the Boston publisher, visited Scotland in 1869, it was for "the author of *Rab*" that he inquired; and by that title doubtless Dr. John Brown, the Edinburgh physician, is most widely known. His chief, though by no means his only, distinction is that he made one dog immortal in literature. Another memorable feat of his was his immortalizing, with the same pen, a precocious child, Marjorie Fleming, Sir Walter Scott's little pet, of whose odd sayings and pathetic fate he wrote under the title of "Pet Marjorie." Swinburne in his tender tribute to Dr. John Brown wished that in the night of death a guiding star might lead his gentle spirit to

Some happier island in the Elysian sea  
Where Rab may lick the hand of Marjorie.

Heredity, environment, and education amply account for the author of *Rab*. He came naturally enough by that love of animals, particularly of dogs, his rare description of which made Sir Henry Taylor call him the Landseer of literature. His grandfather was spoken of as being fuller of love toward all living creatures than any other man in Scotland, and a quaint story is told of his kissing first his little grandson and

then his grandson's pet rabbits. Through an educated ancestry he came rightly too by his love of literature, his great-grandfather having taught himself Greek and much else when a shepherd-boy on the braes of Abernethy, and having walked twenty-four miles at night to Saint Andrews to buy a Greek New Testament; and having by his exceptional knowledge, mysteriously obtained, caused some of the ignorant to accuse him of acquiring his learning by a compact with the devil, although "that astute personage would hardly have employed him on the Greek Testament." The author of Rab came rightly also by his religiousness, both father and grandfather having been "meenisters," each for over fifty years, and his father a professor of theology for twenty-four years in the United Presbyterian Church.

In the volume of his Letters there is less mention of animals than one might expect. Dr. Brown tells us that he wrote the story of Rab and his friends, James and Ailie, one midsummer night between midnight and four in the morning, when he "slunk off to bed satisfied and cold." In one letter he orders a quarter of lamb and a washbasin full of new milk for Rab. What makes his dogs interesting is his discrimination of individual character in each one; at this he is a master. In a letter to a friend, he says: "We have lost our dog, Puck, a fellow of infinite humor and affection and the very doggest of

dogs. Seriously, it is no joke losing a dog. I hope you still have yours, and that it is waxing funnier and unaccountabler than ever." Thanking Sir George Reid, the artist, for his etching of Thomas Edwards, the Banff naturalist, Dr. Brown says that "the eyes are like a sagacious old gray terrier of the United Presbyterian persuasion, as commanding and immediate as the open tubes of a double-barreled gun on full cock." On coming home one day, Dr. Brown said, "I have seen such a good, conscientious dog; his muzzle had come off and he was bringing it home in his mouth." Another day he saw a large dog pass in charge of a coachman whom he knew. "There goes good John," he said, "with that animal which people call 'a magnificent Saint Bernard'; but he is a complete intake, like many men and some women. He has a good face, handsome figure, and *no brains worth mentioning.*" First and last he knew many dogs. He had, all told, several dogs named Bob, numbered as kings are, I, II, III, and IV. Of Bob IV, the last of that dynasty, he writes:

He cost me fifty shillings when young. He arrived by the railway with the coachman holding him by a chain. He was in a general state of consternation; every new sight and sound kept him in perpetual astonishment and ready for anything horrible. Me he eyes, on first sight, in a very peculiar way, with an uncanny look of interest, doubt, and horror. When I took off his chain and collar, he stared at me a moment and then went careering away down the street. I made after him along Princes Street, but soon lost sight of him. I wandered about for some hours, at

last turning into George Street, and there, panting, tongue out, and wearied, was my young friend, Bob IV. But the moment he caught sight of me he was off again.

A far larger space in Dr. Brown's Letters is filled by love of literature, with comments on books and authors, in which he is frequently positive and intense. His aversions are to Charles Dickens and George Eliot; his supreme admiration is for Thackeray and Ruskin. Speaking of Forster's "Life of Dickens," he says:

I dislike the personal essence of both men, though I admire the unique genius of Dickens and the strong though grandiose talent of Forster. I could not finish the second volume of the "Life," I was so angry at both men—Dickens, so hard-hearted, so intense and exacting in his egoism, so self-centered, his falsetto pathos, his caricature run mad, and, above all, his conduct to his wife. My reasons for calling him hard-hearted are, first, my personal knowledge of him for many years and my seeing his adamant selfish egoism; and, second, the revelation of his nature given so frankly in his friend Forster's huge "Life." Dickens was a man soft only on the outside, hard at the core. Forster is a "heavy swell" and has always been offensive to me; he has no sense of humor, and is, as the boy called him, a "harbitary cove."

Dr. Brown's feeling toward George Eliot is one of disgust. When "Middlemarch" appeared he wrote sharp criticisms of it and of her to Lady Minto and other friends:

I don't like Miss Evans' style of mind and feeling. There are too many big words, and the same taint of sensuality which was so offensive in "The Mill on the Floss"—a sort of coarse George Sandism, without her amazing genius and beauty of word. "Middlemarch" is steeped in discomfort, discontent, despair, as she herself is; and she is full of

nasty, unwomanly knowledge which she is always hinting at. She has great power, wit, and prodigious but laborious cleverness, but more talent than genius, more ideas than knowledge of realities. Her views of life, of God, and of all that is deepest and truest in man are low, miserable, hopeless, and she seems always wishing to drag her readers down to her own level. This clever but unhappy woman is much overpraised. She is an anatomist, and in order to be so she must either get her subjects dead to begin with, or kill them. She has none of the sweet, plastic, living power of Miss Austen, or Charlotte Brontë, or even Mrs. Gaskell. Her books are manufactured, not born. She is laboriously clever, disagreeably knowing, unwholesome, and in a high sense unreal, while her unexpected gratuitous nastiness is offensive. I trust that in fifty years she will be forgotten except by critics.

The growth of his admiration for Thackeray is clearly seen in Dr. Brown's letters. He begins in 1851 by telling Lady Trevelyan that he prefers Thackeray to Dickens ten times over as a writer. Of Thackeray's lectures in Edinburgh he writes:

The great man has come, even greater as a man than as a writer; and big as well as great, six feet two, and built large, with a huge, happy, shrewd head, and natural in all his ways. . . . I knew Thackeray would go to your heart. We have just come from his third lecture. What power and gentleness and restraint! I wonder at and love him more and more. To-night he took the whole house by the heart and held them; they were still and serious and broke out wildly at the end. We have seen a great deal of him; he comes and sits for hours, and lays his great nature out before us with its depths and bitternesses, its tenderness and desperate truthfulness. He was delighted with Sir William Thomson; said he was an angel and better, and must have wings under his flannel waistcoat. I said he had, for I had seen them. Uncle James

said of Thackeray's first lecture that its closing, after an hour of sustained brightness, seemed like putting out the light.

When the lectures were over, and the great lecturer had gone home, Dr. Brown wrote:

They have taken away our god and we are out of employment. One thing we are most grateful to him for is that he delivered us from Mary Queen of Scots, and Bruce, and Haggis, and Burns, and Auld Reekie, and Hugh Miller. Did you read his speeches at the farewell dinner? He was in such a fright, and stumbled and stuck delightfully—and thought he had made an utter ass of himself. He was so surprised and grateful at what was said of him. If you had seen his pathetic, dumb face, like a great child going to cry, when he stood up to return thanks you would have had a good honest cry, as I nearly had. He thought he had made an immense fool of himself till he saw it in print next morning. We are more infatuated about him than ever.

Dr. Brown's other ardent enthusiasm was for Ruskin, to whose faults he was not, however, at all blind. In 1857 he wrote a friend:

Ruskin is to be in Glasgow lecturing. You must let me make him known to you. He is odd and willful, but he is pure and good, and an amazing genius.

In 1864 he wrote Lady Trevelyan:

I see Ruskin is fighting away in his insolent and magnificent way about his glaciers. I am sure he has wings under his jacket; he is not a man but a stray angel who, having singed his wings a little, tumbled into our sphere. He has all the arrogance, insight, unreasonableness, and spiritual "sheen" of a celestial being.

Ten years later he asked after Ruskin as follows:

Is our Genius at the Village du Simplon now? These bits from him about the Alps are like apples of gold in pictures of silver, great, nourishing thoughts in noble, beautiful words. I wish we could cheer him a bit, but he has heaven before him to let grow his wings and satisfy his longing soul. . . . His Mornings in Florence are exquisite, like delicious fruit. What an artesian well he is! or, rather, one of nature's great springs; he seems to me never to ebb.

To Ruskin himself he wrote in 1881:

Your writings show no loss of general power whether of conception or industry; the active brightness of your entire soul is the same as of old. You burn like iron wire in oxygen, and I often wonder how you survive your own intensity. I hope you are taking your oatmeal porridge and cream, and sleeping full eight hours in the twenty-four.

His opinion of Matthew Arnold appears in such expressions as the following: "I cannot read much at a time now. Last night I stuck fast in Arnold's brilliant and precocious lecture. The man is strong in his writings; his individuality never deserts his words." "I see Matthew Arnold, in his defense of himself in the *Contemporary*, is coming nearer the God of Israel and Paul. He says God is 'The Eternal' (this time a large E) 'not ourselves, that [he might say Who] makes for righteousness.' I would willingly adopt his name for God—I know of none fuller and less utterly inadequate than The Eternal. What a sinewy style Arnold's is! He plainly knows what *style* means." "Have you seen the august Matthew Arnold's 'Ode on Stanley'? It seems to me pretentious, thin, pe-

dantic, and heartless; well worded, of course; but who else, standing at his friend's grave, would use the word 'cecity,' which Sir Thomas Browne, the delightful old pedant, once used. The great Matthew looks at the universe, and also at God, through *an eyeglass*, one eye shut, and wearing a supreme air."

Of Dean Stanley Dr. Brown says:

I have read his last book. It is excellent, and so like the courageous, cordial, free spirit that is his. I like Tulloch, too, and thought him right as to Stanley's want of the sense of sin and the need of a Saviour. Religion cannot be taught without dogma, which is just another word for doctrine—a thing to be taught. It is the abuse of dogma that is mischievous, as when Calvin made his followers say there were children in hell not a span long. Stanley's sermon, which you sent, is such as no man living but himself could have written or thought of writing—such fervor, such spiritual quickness, such affectionateness, with all that rich, unexpected, yet natural utterance. Other preachers are eloquent or subtle or learned or weighty, but he alone is *apostolic* in spirit, as if he had in him the very blood of John of Patmos. I wish Stanley had not been so tender to Renan, whose compliments to the man Christ Jesus, after stripping him of his Godhead, I cannot accept. If so stripped, is he worth worshiping?

Dr. Brown approves Lady Minto's comment on Renan's theories, "The endeavor to produce or account for supernatural results by natural means is a complete failure." He says:

I could preach a sermon on those words. They touch the core of the matter as with a needle. Nothing better has been said about Renan's delusive and deluded hook. Supernatural results *are* produced; therefore they must have an adequate supernatural Cause, and Causer. . . .



I hack the words, "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord," against Renan and all his crew.

Of some of Tyndall's utterances he wrote:

Ridicule is one of the best ways of meeting his pernicious and idiotic stuff. Ruskin has scourged him in the most delightful manner.

Clough is one of Dr. Brown's enthusiasms.

I place Clough very high as an intellectual and moral poet; and I would like to have a kick at the imaginative crew, Dobell, Smith, that varmint Massey, *et hoc genus omne*, who are bedeviling and bedrunkifying our literature. I always liked, indeed loved, Clough, and felt his sensibility and power; and that uncertainty of conviction of his, and sense of the riddle of existence, drew him very much to myself as being like-minded; but there is a *sadness*, in the sense of bread that is heavy, a want of all gayety and elasticity about him and his works. He is forever damp with dead passion.

It is interesting to compare with Professor Winchester's masterly portraiture of John Wilson, Dr. Brown's brief reference to him:

I admire the great Christopher, but cannot entirely respect him. There is a dash of *bosh* in him, a hulliballooishness, and a sort of demoralized and demoralizing sentimentality that at first catches and then disgusts me; but he is big and noble and full of love, if you keep him off cockneys and vermin in general—there he is as merciless as my dog is to cat or rat. I have been very busy doctoring and am thoroughly tired. Two weeks ago I felt as if the Hourglass of Life was all but run out for me, but somehow Somebody turned the glass and the sands are running more briskly. But when the *nunc dimittis* comes neither you nor I will break our hearts at going down that stair; it leads out into the everlasting heaven and its stars.

In 1879 Dr. Brown writes to a friend:

I have been reading a clever but unsavory book on "French Novelists and Poets." What a rotten set these De Mussetts and Gautiers and Balzacs and George Sands! full of the very "superfluity of naughtiness." *Sin*, the vilest forms of it, seems to them the most entertaining and pleasant of all things. The French lady who said, "Ices are so delicious; it is a pity taking them isn't a sin" was typical. They verily say, "Evil be thou my good"; they have devilish cleverness in expressing thoughts and feelings that should never be expressed.

A brief reference to Chaucer is this:

He is primary in his own line. In description he is an inspired child finding himself in *Juventus mundi*, and getting the first crush of the grapes. There is too much animalism here and there, but not of the unwholesome kind; it is not a disease in him as it is in many modern writers; but it is unsuited to our time and taste.

On Wordsworth we find such comments as these:

I read "The Excursion" when I was eighteen, and was a different man from that time. He was a revelation to me, and added a precious seeing to the eye and to the mind. But he too often drivels and talks numerous prose to a frightful extent. To me Wordsworth's great defect is his want of humor, of a sense of the ludicrous and incongruous. I feel this even more than his prosiness. But that he was a great poet, the greatest of his day, I never doubt. Byron, when he is a poet, which often he is not, is the poet of passion, of the "heart tumult"; he would have been a greater poet if he had had the deep feeling, the quiet, steady human-heartedness of Wordsworth.

This is Dr. Brown's opinion of another great poet:

I have been reading Browning largely and carefully. He is a very true and great poet, more of both than Tennyson

is by a great way. There is a wonderful *quantity* of thought and feeling in him, and he is always himself, never aping anyone; at times he is rough and difficult, and goes off into mere thinking—very strong and rugged but not poetry.

Dr. Brown met our James Russell Lowell and was much taken with him and his poetry. He wrote:

Lowell is the greatest poet our American cousins have yet sent forth, greatest in reach of thought and feeling, in humor, in spontaneity, and in general felicity of language. Whittier comes nearest him. Longfellow is a sort of male Mrs. Hemans. Lowell's "Biglow Papers" are full of wit, wisdom, and freshness. I would rather be he than Tennyson or Browning; there is more of the light of common day, more naturalness of thought and word, and no want of depth or tenderness, with humor of strongest and rarest flavor.

Of interest are Dr. Brown's comments on two great antagonists in public life, both of whom figure largely in literature. In a letter to a friend in 1862 is this:

I really wonder at your worship of Disraeli. Do you honestly look upon that splendid scamp as a patriot? I admire Benjamin as a man of genius and infinite audacity, and as the author of Henrietta Temple and of his own fortunes; but as Prime Minister and the mouthpiece of British power, it amazes me that you can believe in him.

Of Disraeli's opponent and rival Dr. Brown is also critical:

I like Gladstone and I don't. He is a wonderful man, and full of boy, fresh, and eager, and such a range of sympathy and interest, such serious, great eyes and such a look of earnestness; but—he is the son of his father. He lacks the oneness, the simplicity that make and go with

the greatest greatness. I think more of Gladstone as a statesman than as a writer, and most of all as a financier. I think there is a nimiousness or too-muchness often about him from his enormous superfluity of energy. Still he is the biggest man of our party. He would get on more smoothly if he were more worldly-wise.

Doubtless this Edinburgh physician's celebrity is due chiefly to his literary work and very little to prominence in his profession. In these published letters there are comparatively few glimpses of his life as a medical man. But his intellectuality, his shrewd wisdom, his tender sympathy, his keen insight into human nature, and his sweet humor must have made him a physician greatly to be desired, trusted, and loved. No one who has read his writings is surprised at the story told of him by Charles Dickens, how when he was a young doctor and the cholera was raging at Chatham he remained all night with a poor woman whom everybody else had deserted, ministering to her to the end, and then, overcome with fatigue, falling asleep, and being found in the early morning, when the house was entered, lying asleep on the floor.

Religion fills even more space than literature in Dr. John Brown's letters. In the first year of his medical practice this "meenister's" son writes to his younger brother, William, thus:

Be assured that there is no real happiness where there is indulgence in guilt—that pure thoughts and upright actions cause happiness as certainly as the sun causes light and heat. Keep this always before you; *know* the God of your fathers. Although I fear I am not as religious as I

should be, I can see from experience that the way of transgression is *hard*. In everything you do, think of its *strict morality*. In the place where you are now going you will be exposed to great temptation, and if you do not *instantly* take *high ground* you will never be safe. When you hear impure talk, leave the room at once, and give them to know that you differ from them because *God* differs from them; and when asked why you will not do so and so, never be ashamed of saying God has forbidden it—the *Bible* says so and so.

A little later we find this to the same brother:

I am somehow very void of thought and feeling to-night. I sometimes wonder whether I am really under the control and guidance of God's Spirit, yet I have great relish for religion and am quite satisfied that nothing else is worth anything; but I go on from day to day, always about to be and never quite reaching it. Like you, I am far from satisfied with my own state. I am distinctly *two persons*, a *good* and an *evil*. I feel a certain reverence and godly fear and an intense desire to be on his side; but this is interrupted sometimes and then I am the same thoughtless, impure fool as ever. I believe this arises from a want of real love for God, but, like you, I cannot control my thoughts by reason of darkness.

In 1864, a short time after the death of his wife, Dr. Brown replied to a friend's message of sympathy thus:

Thanks for your kind and comforting note. I had sunk into a sort of heavy torpor, and your words roused me. My great loss is much more felt in its fullness now than it was at first. I have now time to be selfish and miserable and to ply myself with reproaches—a very foolish and, it may be, sinful exercise. I have thought much lately about Jacob's wrestling with the angel, finding his weakness and his strength at the same time, and going on through the rest of his life lame and halting but submissive and even rejoicing. I believe this is the one great lesson of life—

the being *subdued by God*. If this is done, all else is subdued and won.

A while after this he writes:

Every now and then comes a day of stupid wretchedness, idle remorse, and useless wishings for the impossible and the lost. God and his love are to be had for the asking, but they *must be asked*.

Writing to a friend, and referring to the Rev. Dr. Charles Watson, who was then sorely bereaved in the death of his wife, Dr. Brown says:

I am as sorry as is in me for the big man and his loneliness; but then he is big and good, and can contain himself and live for others; and his books and his work and his friends will cheer and help him. How I wish I could sit under his preaching and hear him speak the living truth now! If I could only he *made whole*! How much and yet how little a man can do to be made whole! "Believe and live!" Yes, but of yourself you can do nothing, not even believe.

In 1874 he wrote John Ruskin thus:

Last Sunday I heard, in a little Baptist chapel in the woods near Pitlochry, a most excellent sermon on "What is that to thee? *Follow thou me*." I am more and more convinced that the essence of Christianity and of righteousness and of all goodness is in following the Christ, in thinking, feeling, and acting (within our human limits) as he would do were he in our place.

In the letters of this "meenister's" son we are not surprised to find much about ministers. When his own father was well on in years this, his son, wrote thus about him to a friend:

We have been getting famous discourses from the clear-eyed vehement old man, full of rich, convincing truth, and

arguments heated and softened and made irresistible by holy passion. Give a man an absolutely right principle and he can hardly be extravagant. The other day, at the close of a most beautiful and informing sermon about Mary, Lazarus' sister, anointing the feet of Jesus, he read in his most impressive style the second psalm, "Why do the heathen rage?" etc., and then suddenly he pushed up his spectacles on his forehead, and in his own old way *flung himself* at the people with these words: "Where is Jesus, and where is Lazarus *now*? And where are those priests and rulers of the people *now*? Jesus has gone up and sits forever on the throne of the universe, and Lazarus is with him seeing him as he is. Where those others are, in heaven or in hell, I know not; but this I do know—wherever they be, they are and shall forever be *at* or *under* his feet!" And thus the great old preacher ended.

One Sunday in Edinburgh Dr. Brown's sister and a friend of hers wanted him to go with them to hear Dr. Candlish. He said, "No; I know too many people in that church; the elders will all come to shake hands with me." But the girls coaxed and he went. The subject was "Prayer." On the way home Dr. Brown said: "You were good girls to take me there. It was *splendid*; he first made you feel that you could ask for *anything*, a five-pound note or a shilling if you needed it, and then he *dared* you to have any overmastering wish but 'Thy will be done.' "

Dr. Brown quotes Sydney Smith as saying in one of his sermons that it is good for a man to get out of a great city and into country places where he is compelled to feel the presence of an unseen Omnipotence at work, and to see some things in the making of which neither he nor

his kind have had any share. In May, 1862, a letter from Dr. Brown to his brother, Alexander, contains the following:

This is the week of the Synod, and Uncle Smith [the moderator that year] is in his glory—a sort of meek importance all over the dear little man. John Cairns is Augustine, John Calvin, Jonathan Edwards, and *himself* all in one. He preached twice on Sunday; very great he was. Dr. David Cairns and his wife were here, very happy, very healthy, with a sort of scriptural look about them.

Part of a letter to Dr. Peter Davidson is worth quoting because of a gentle admonition to fairness which it contains:

I am delighted with your book. It is sure to do good by its honesty, accuracy, force, and, most of all, by its deep godliness. I hesitate to say so, but there are some severe expressions in the first lecture that I could wish mollified. Every accusation or insinuation against the *sincerity* of a man is dangerous, because, though we can know about our own sincerity and motives, in the nature of the case we hardly ever can judge certainly those of our brother. And you always gain in the main by giving your opponent all you honestly can, before smiting him to the ground. The man you are criticizing is conceited and silly, too ignorant to know truth when he sees it, and he is rash and unfair and offensive, but I do believe the man honestly *thinks* he is doing God service; though he is, as you have shown, ludicrously vain and uninformed and one-eyed.

A letter to Lady Minto, in 1871, has the following:

We enjoyed Jowett's visit, and he seemed happy in his quiet way. I liked his sermon for the most part, but with my old-fashioned beliefs I miss the doctrine of sin and salvation. He told me what Lord Westbury said about Judge Bovill, who presided at the trial of the Tichborne



claimant: "If he only had a little more experience, he would make the worst judge that ever sat upon the bench."

On one preacher whom he heard in a country church, Dr. Brown makes this criticism:

The sermon was good, only the man vociferated and roared. It was like the sharp, shattering discharge of a Calvinistic mitrailleuse in your face. And, besides, the man called himself "this worm."

Of the charming personality of the Rev. John Ker this is written:

Ker was here, entirely delightful, a pure, benign, happy intelligence—a sort of domestic sun radiating warmth and light.

About one noted preacher the last reference is in a letter in 1873:

Dr. Candlish is dying, without pain, blessing all about him sweetly, quite gentle, and happy. It is very touching and impressive; this fierce, troublous, assertive man, lying there now as gentle and docile as a child. I have always felt that at the core he was good and true-hearted, and living very close to God, becoming continually more kindly, more desirous to agree with his brethren, more aware of how small are many of the things he once thought worth fighting for. There is a great deal of Saint Paul about Candlish. I think the likeliest thing after death is that the soul falls asleep, and does not even dream, so that from our death to the Great Day is to our consciousness but the twinkling of an eye.

About another dying man he wrote:

Alexander Brown is near to death and knows it. He told me yesterday that few things delighted him so much as thinking of the free, clear, infinite range his thoughts would soon have about everything.

In 1871 Sir William Thomson delivered a great address as president of the British Association of Science. Concerning that address Dr. John Brown wrote a friend:

What a sweep of wing, like a mighty angel's, and such deep, wide, reverent, true science, with its "everlasting law of honor"! The stereotyped clergy and their people may be down on him for saying that our world may have been peopled from the debris of other worlds, and that we may have been evolved not merely from apes and monads, but from fern seeds; but, as I see it, God's will and power had not less scope in creating things by that method than by what has been called the direct creative act. Surely, if we go far enough back, we find God inhabiting his own eternity, dwelling alone, and then saying "Let it be" and it was; and that *it*, no matter how small, has in it the potentiality of the whole; and *he* put it there. Now, if he put it there and sustains it, and if in the case of man there was some special and differentiating addition of a moral sense shared with him by God, by which, in a way different from all other living creatures, man was made in the divine image, capable of communion with God, why, that theory seems to me as satisfactory as it is scientific. But perhaps I am getting out of my depth.

None of the letters draw us more closely and tenderly to Dr. Brown than those written in his years of ill health and after his wife's death. A letter to John Ruskin in 1871 says:

My son is with me. My daughter Helen is married, and happy as this world goes. As for me, five years ago in June my mind lost its self-control for a short time. It went off like a watch that has lost the restraint on the spring, and which runs through a day in ten minutes; and though now outwardly quiet and even torpid, I am like a Rupert drop that knew its peril and that spite of outward smoothness might burst any minute. I am done for, cannot

write, cannot think, to any purpose, have no relish for anything but sleep and forgetfulness. O, I work every day at my regular tasks, but within all things have come to an end. I only feel that I cannot feel. My brain is like a mouth without teeth, and my memory has struck work.

Closing our report of these letters our last sentence must not be one that shows the beautiful life and rare spirit of the author of "Rab and His Friends" with gloomy shadows on it. Rather will we place here at the end, like a west window lit by the sunset, his own description of the west front of Wells Cathedral:

It is simply glorious; It is literally the *Te Deum* in stone; there are the glorious company of the Apostles, the noble army of Martyrs, and all the rest, praising Him, acknowledging Him to be the Lord.

Similarly ennobled and dignified by the sacred glories of the Christian faith stood the west front of this loved Scottish physician's life when the light of sunset shone upon it.

## EMILY DICKINSON: THE HERMIT THRUSH OF AMHERST

IN this subject we have a Human Enigma and a Literary Surprise.

On Main Street in the college town of Amherst, Massachusetts, stands a large old-fashioned cupolaed square brick mansion, surrounded by ample grounds with trees and blooming shrubs, in which was born on December 10, 1830, and died on May 15, 1886, at the age of fifty-six, a singular and mysterious woman. During the last thirty years of her life Miss Emily Dickinson withdrew herself from intercourse with the world outside her home into a seclusion more and more complete and impenetrable, until she became entirely unknown except to a few who were mostly friends of her youth; and with them her intercourse was almost exclusively through the post office. For many years she declined to go outside her father's front gate, and finally for several years she refused to step foot beyond the threshold of the house, even to go into the garden to see her flowers. She had moods in which she would not see her dearest friends when they came a long distance to the house. She seems to have so treated Samuel Bowles, editor and proprietor of the Springfield Republican, for one letter to him says: "Friend, Sir: I did not

see you yesterday. Perhaps you thought I didn't care, because I stayed out. I did care, Mr. Bowles. I pray for your sweet health to Allah every morning; but something troubled me, and I knew you needed light and air, so I didn't come in to darken you. Won't you come back? Can't I bring you something?" Considering her gifts and opportunities, she must be counted about the shyest bit of flesh and blood living in our neighborhood in our day.

The father of this eccentric woman was the Hon. Edward Dickinson, the leading lawyer of Amherst, at one time member of Congress and at another of the Massachusetts Legislature, treasurer of Amherst College, and in other ways prominent in church and in civil affairs. Once a year Mr. Dickinson gave a reception at his house to the college families and other choice society of the place. On these occasions his daughter Emily appeared and met the local world, doing her part as a hostess in such gracious manner, says one report, that no one would have suspected it was not her usual mode of life; but another account affirms that sometimes at these receptions she sat apart in silence with her face averted from the company or went away into another room by herself; which recalls George William Curtis's description of Hawthorne at the Concord Club, sitting gloomily like a dark statue of night and silence off at one side by himself under a portrait of Dante. She undoubtedly shared the

feeling of the Harvard professor, who, being approached at the close of an evening reception in his own house by a gushing lady guest with the inquiry, "How often do you have these delightful reunions, Professor?" answered without the slightest prevarication, "Thank heaven, madam, only once a year!" For one mid-June she writes her brother Austin:

I expect all our grandfathers and all their country cousins will come here to spend commencement, and don't doubt the stock will rise several per cent that week. If we children could obtain board for the week in some "vast wilderness," I think we should have good times. Our house will be crowded daily with the members of this world, the high and the low, the bond and the free, the "poor in this world's goods" and the "almighty dollar"; and what in the world they are after continues to be unknown. But I hope they will pass away as insects and let us reap together in golden harvest time.

Here in another letter to Austin Dickinson is another cry in the same key:

The usual rush of callers, and this beleaguered family as yet in want of time. I do hope immortality will last a little while, but if the A——s should happen to get there first, we shall be driven *there*.

These expressions indicate that the young woman of twenty-three already feels distaste for much society.

The queer hermit habits of the latter half of her life make us wonder what sort of a person she was originally, before this strange tendency seized her. When about fifteen she was for two years a pupil in Mount Holyoke Seminary,

under that wonderful woman, Mary Lyon. The letters of that time are those of a bright, affectionate girl. To an Amherst schoolmate such natural chatter as this:

Your *beau ideal*, D——, I have not seen lately. I presume he was changed into a star some night while gazing at them, and placed in the constellation Orion between Bellatrix and Betelegeux. . . . I expect I have altered a good deal since I saw you. I have grown tall, and wear my golden tresses done up in a net-cap. . . . I am growing handsome very fast indeed! I expect I shall be the belle of Amherst when I reach my seventeenth year. I don't doubt I shall have perfect crowds of admirers at that age. Then how I shall delight to make them await my bidding, and witness their suspense while I make my final decision! . . . I have lately come to the conclusion that I am Eve, alias Mrs. Adam. You know there is no account of her death in the Bible, so why am I not Eve? If you find any documents likely to prove the truth of the case, I wish you would send them to me without delay. . . . I love this seminary, and all the teachers are strongly bound to my heart.

The best answer to our query, What was she in youth? is given by her schoolmate, Mrs. Gordon L. Ford, mother of Paul Leicester Ford, who tells of a bright bevy of eight girls in Amherst about 1850, with talent enough for twice their number, of which circle Emily Dickinson was the wit and humorist and by her brilliancy often the center of attraction. These girls took long walks over the lovely hills, made excursions to Mount Norwottock, five miles away, met to discuss books, puzzled over Emerson, read the latest poems by Lowell, Longfellow,

Whittier, and laughed over O. W. Holmes's wit. They were at the adoring age, fifteen to twenty, worshiped many golden idols, and were full of the literary enthusiasm pervading a college town. When a college tutor presumed on his eight years' seniority to advise them to leave Lowell and Emerson and read Byron, who "had a much better style," Emily Dickinson went into a fit of passionate crying. When it was suggested in a Shakespeare club, composed of young women and young men, that it would be necessary to use an expurgated edition for their readings, she took her departure with a lofty air, saying, "There's nothing wicked in Shakespeare." As a sample of Emily's breezy letters, showing the merry-hearted girl, take this description of an influenza cold and how she got it, written to Miss Strong the winter she was twenty:

I am occupied principally with a cold just now, and the dear creature *will* have so much attention that my time slips away amazingly. It has heard so much of New Englanders, of their kind attention to strangers, that it comes all the way from the Alps to determine the truth of the tale. It says the half wasn't told it, and I begin to be afraid it wasn't. Only think—came all the way from distant Switzerland to find what was the truth! Neither husband, friend, nor protector accompanied it, and so utter a state of loneliness gives friends if nothing else.

She had gone out for a walk on a January afternoon too thinly clad, and her yarn about what happened is as follows:



Attracted by the gayety visible in the street, I kept on walking till a little chill-footed creature pounced upon the thin shawl I wore and commenced riding. I begged the creature to alight, as I was fatigued already and quite unable to assist others. It wouldn't get down and began talking to itself thus: "Can't be New England—must have made some mistake—disappointed in my reception—don't agree with accounts. O, what a world of deception and fraud! Marm, will you tell me the name of this country—it's Asia Minor, isn't it? I intended to stop in New England." By this time I was so completely exhausted that I made no further effort to rid me of my load, but traveled home at a rapid jog; got into the house and threw off bonnet and shawl, when out flew my tormentor, and, putting both arms around my neck, began to kiss me immoderately and express so much love it completely bewildered me. Since then it has slept in my bed, eaten from my plate, lived with me everywhere, and will tag me through life for all I know. I think I'll wake first, and get out of bed, and leave it; but early or late, it is dressed before me, and sits on the side of the bed looking right into my face with such a comical expression it almost makes me laugh in spite of my misery. I can't call it interesting, but it certainly is curious—has two peculiarities which would quite win your heart—a huge pocket handkerchief and a very red nose. The first seems so abundant it gives you the idea of independence and prosperity in business. The last brings up the "jovial bowl, my boys." If it ever gets tired of me, I'll forward it to you; you would love it for my sake if not for its own; it will tell you some queer stories about me—how I sneezed so loud one night that the family thought the last trump was sounding and climbed into the currant-bushes to get out of the way; how the rest of the people, arrayed in long nightgowns, folded their arms and were waiting; but this is a wicked fib. Now, my dear friend, let me tell you these last thoughts are fiction—vain imaginations to lead astray foolish young women. They are flowers of speech; they both make and tell deliberate falsehoods; avoid them as the snake, and turn aside as from the rattlesnake, and I don't think you will be harmed.

Honestly, though, a snake-bite is a serious matter, and there can't be too much said or done about it. The "old serpent" bites the deepest, and we get so accustomed to his bites that we don't mind about them. "Verily, I say unto you, fear *him*." Won't you read some work upon snakes? I have a real anxiety for you. I love those little green ones that slide around by your shoes in the grass and make it rustle with their elbows; they are rather my favorites, on the whole, but I wouldn't influence *you* for the world. There is an air of misanthropy about the striped snake that may commend it to your taste.

In those early days Mrs. Ford remembers no sign of the future recluse; only, once, Emily asked her if it did not make her shiver to hear a great many people talk because, she said, "they take all the clothes off their souls"—indicating that she keenly felt in others a lack of that delicacy and sensitive modesty which were so exquisite in her and so sacred to her. At twenty-two she writes with interest of levees at the president's and of attending receptions at the houses of Professors Tyler and Haven. Yet that very year she writes a friend of school days:

You ask me to come and see you. Thank you, but I don't go from home unless emergency leads me by the hand, and then I do it obstinately, and draw back if I can. Should I ever leave home, which is improbable, I will, with much delight, accept your invitation; till then, my warmest thanks are yours, but don't expect me. I'm so old-fashioned, darling, that all your friends would stare.

The next year there are strong signs of a growing disinclination to mingle in a social *mêlée*. On the June day in 1853 when the town was all astir with processions and bands celebrating the

opening of the railroad into Amherst, she wrote her brother:

Carriages flew like sparks hither and thither and yon, and all said 'twas fine. I "spose" it was. I sat in Professor Tyler's woods and saw the train move off and then came home again for fear somebody would see me and ask me how I did.

This shrinking from observation increases. The next year the twenty-four-year-old young woman writes her brother: "I went to meeting five minutes before the bell rang, morning and afternoon, so as not to have to go in after all the people had got there." The same year dislike for unfamiliar contacts is oddly indicated in one expression when she has to wash and wipe the dishes because Margaret, a valued servant, has seen fit to marry a widower with four children. She says, "I winched at her loss, because I was in the habit of her, and even a new rolling-pin has an embarrassing element of strangeness." That by the time she was thirty-one she was retiring into a very close seclusion, which she meant to preserve until life's end, is shown in a letter to her friend Mrs. Anthon, which closes thus:

Inducements for you to visit Amherst, dear Katie, are as they were: I am pleasantly located off here in the deep sea, but love will row you out to me if her hands are strong; and don't wait for me to land on your coast, for I'm going ashore on the other side.

For her strange withdrawal from the world no more definite explanation is given us than that

of Mrs. Todd: "She had tried society and found it lacking." One of the defects she finds in folks is perhaps intimated in the queer question she asked Colonel Higginson: "How do most people live—without any thoughts? There are many people in the world—you must have noticed them in the street—how do they live? How do they get strength to put on their clothes in the morning?" Now, this was said by a woman who had the entrée of the college circle in a town where the average of intelligence is presumably high and culture saturates society. So there could have been no lack of intelligent and attractive company. Two little verses tell us that she and the squirrel are of one mind; a plausible appearance is not enough in persons or in nuts—the question of the kernel is uppermost for both; and "Meat within is requisite to squirrels and to me."

When Higginson writes inquiring what companionship she has, she answers in her odd way: "Hills, sir, and the sundown, and a dog as large as myself that my father bought me. They are better than beings, because they know but do not tell. I know the butterfly and the lizard and the orchis." When asked why she shuns men and women, she answers: "They talk of hallowed things aloud and embarrass my dog. He and I don't object to them if they'll exist their side. I think Carlo would please you; he is dumb and brave. I think you would like the chestnut tree

I met in my walk. It hit my notice suddenly and I thought the skies were in blossom. Then there's a noiseless noise in the orchard that I let persons hear."

All we know is that her isolation was as voluntary as it is mysterious. She was not driven from society any more than Thoreau was driven to Walden Pond. She was not embittered by ill treatment like Thomas B. Laughton, Celia Thaxter's father, who, turning his back in passionate scorn upon the treachery of the human race, gathered up his family and left the mainland forever, never to set foot on it again, to be the keeper of White Island light, to make his home, and after many years of stubborn self-isolation, his grave, upon the rocky Isles of Shoals in the great wild ocean's bosom. We are forbidden to think of her as "a stricken deer that left the herd"; and yet—who knows?—there may have been some silent umbrage early taken, some secret indignation at the world, unuttered but abiding, which made her resolve to part company and have no more to do with it. Or was it simply an intensification and settled submergence into Wordsworth's feeling, "The world is too much for us"? We know that Tennyson all his life had an almost morbid aversion to society; Jowett called Tennyson the shyest person he ever knew. We know that Goethe, dissatisfied with human intercourse, resolved to build a Chinese wall around his inner life; that Matthew Arnold, at

thirty-five, wrote to his sister from a place in which he had hidden away: "‘Hide thy life,’ said Epicurus, and the exquisite zest there is in doing so can only be appreciated by those who, desiring to introduce some method into their lives, have suffered from the malicious pleasure the world takes in trying to distract them till they are as shatter-brained and empty-hearted as the world itself." The desire for solitude and silence has filled us all at times.

For reasons of her own, not divulged by her nor discernible by us, Emily Dickinson deliberately decided to clear a space of privacy large enough to walk around in unmolested and unobserved, to put her days under cover in a seclusion which shut out prying eyes and neighborhood inquisition. She asserted with dignity and persistence her individual right to choose her own way of life, and live it free from dictation and espionage. Whether this right be conceded or not, history has sometimes been made vital and spiritual, as well as picturesque, by certain forsakers of custom’s beaten path, non-conformists, rebels against conventionality and uniformity, who were as noble as they were high-spirited. The spirit of the seclusiveness she practiced breathes in her own lines: "The soul selects her own society—then shuts the door," and thereafter notes unmoved whatever chariot pauses at her gate or emperor kneels outside upon her doormat:

I've known her from an ample nation  
Choose one;  
Then close the valves of her attention  
Like stone.

Of another T. B. Aldrich wrote:

This is her Book of Verses—wrenlike notes,  
Shy franknesses, blind gropings, haunting fears;  
At times across the chords abruptly floats  
A mist of passionate tears.  
A fragile lyre, too tensely keyed and strung,  
A broken music, weirdly incomplete;  
Here a proud mind, self-baffled and self-stung,  
Lies coiled in dark defeat.

If one should try to use those lines in a description of Emily Dickinson, he would find them inapplicable, for we do not catch her weeping, and she is not frightened; we do not see her mind lying in dark defeat like a suicide's body at the bottom of a pool; instead of stinging herself she is enjoying herself; and instead of being baffled she seems to have ways of getting to windward of fate.

As she was a recluse, not a captive, in retirement, not in confinement, her mode of life no way necessitated by ill health, by unsuitable environment, or by lack of sociable and coaxing love outside—so there is no tone of plaintive resignation to hard conditions, no resentment of maltreatment, no morose misanthropy or morbid moping. She nowhere says that life is vanity and vexation of spirit. The woman of forty says to Colonel Higginson, "I find ecstasy in living; the mere sense of living is joy enough." Her

letters do not indicate that she breathed a stagnant and unwholesome air. Her privacy is not like that of a cell either of prison, asylum, or convent, but as of a tent pitched on a hillside apart, in sunshine and wind, sweet with odors and bird songs. She is no self-indulgent, self-admiring Marie Bashkirtseff, silly and vain and selfish; no, but a loving and humble and helpful woman, not a romantic, mooning maiden, but a practical, matter-of-fact little body, interested in homely household affairs and often busy with prosaic domestic tasks. Until life's later years she was digging her flower beds and tending her plants with as keen pleasure as Celia Thaxter in her Appledore island garden.

The girl of twenty writes Mrs. Strong: "Twin loaves of bread have just been born into the world under my auspices—fine children, the image of their mother." And then she speaks of the good she herself derives from such work—"the genial housekeeping influence stealing over mind and soul." But the influence did not always steal quite so genially. Once, when domestic perplexities got into a vexatious predicament, and dust and dirt were thick, and everything went wrong, she found herself in "great dudgeon at life," and expressed her disgust over kitchen tasks, and then said, "Don't be afraid of my imprecations; they never did anyone harm, and they make me feel so cool and so very much more comfortable." Then she writes that.



"housekeeping is a prickly art." When a middle-aged woman she tells Colonel Higginson that she makes all the bread for the family, because her father likes only hers, and adds, "And people must have puddings"—this reference, it is said, with a shy and mysterious air, as if puddings were meteors or comets, difficult of capture. She is afraid she might be sentimental, "if it wasn't for broad daylight and cooking stoves and roosters"; but so sure as she gets to dreaming a shrill crowing from the neighboring yard dissipates illusion and lands her on terra firma. Once when she was making a loaf of cake with Maggie over the red-hot stove, she fainted and was unconscious several hours. No wonder that when Higginson asked if she never felt any want of employment, never going off the grounds and rarely seeing a visitor, she answered, "I never thought of conceiving that I could ever have the slightest approach to such a want in all future time."

That this eccentric and mysteriously sequestered life was producing, in its long silent years, any literary product was known only to a dozen or twenty persons, occasional correspondents, and mostly old friends, to whom with her letters she would sometimes inclose the latest bit of verse she had written. They were mostly literary people. Among them were Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Bowles, Dr. and Mrs. J. G. Holland, Helen Hunt, Mrs. Gordon L. Ford, Mrs. Strong, and a few

others like them. Some of them earnestly solicited her permission to put these fragments in print, but were refused. Two years before Miss Dickinson's death, Helen Hunt Jackson, an early schoolmate, wrote her: "What portfolios of verse you must have! It is a cruel wrong to your 'day and generation' that you will not give them light. I wish you would make me your literary legatee and executor." To Colonel Higginson Emily Dickinson wrote that her mind was as much a stranger to any thought of publishing what she had written as the firmament is unaccustomed to be navigated by fins. So far as the public knows, she expressed no wish for even a posthumous publication of her poetry. The nearest approach to an indication that she expected it is found in the two verses which read as if they might have been intended for the place her editors have given them as a prefix to the volume of her verse:

This is my letter to the world,  
That never wrote to me—  
The simple news that nature told  
With tender majesty.

Her message is committed  
To hands I cannot see;  
For love of her, sweet countrymen,  
Judge tenderly of me!

Many readers of her unique poetry have had curiosity to know how this singular woman looked. Roberts Brothers announced her letters to be accompanied with a portrait, but it proved

only a vexatious disappointment, being from a poor daguerreotype of a child eight years old. The only description of Emily's appearance in girlhood is from Mrs. Ford, who says, "Though not beautiful, she had great beauties. Her eyes were lovely auburn, soft and warm, her hair lay in rings of the same color all over her head, and her skin and teeth were fine. She was exquisitely neat and careful in her dress, and always had flowers about her." To this school friend she sent on request when she was eighteen one of her auburn ringlets with the words, "I shall never give you anything again that will be half so full of sunshine as this wee lock of hair."

When Colonel Higginson, puzzled to imagine what sort of a person it can be who is writing him such piquant, evasive, and enigmatic letters, requests her to send a photograph, she answers that she has no picture, and adds this naïve pen-portrait: "I am small like the wren, and my hair is bold like the red chestnut burr, and my eyes like the sherry in the glass which the guest leaves. Would this do just as well?" Inviting him to come to Amherst for an interview, she writes: "You will find a minute host, but a spacious welcome." Higginson, who afterward saw her twice, says her face was "without a single good feature, but with eyes, as she said, 'like the sherry the guest leaves in the glass,' and with smooth bands of reddish chestnut hair." The fact of her own petiteness seems to be in the

foreground of her consciousness. She writes that she has a dog as large as herself, and signs herself "your gnome." Her thought about her own person is seen also in this query:

On such a night, or such a night,  
Would anybody care  
If such a little figure  
Slipped quiet from its chair?

On such a dawn, or such a dawn,  
Would anybody sigh  
That such a little figure  
Too sound asleep did lie

For chanticleer to wake it,  
Or stirring house below,  
Or giddy bird in orchard,  
Or early task to do?

Another glimpse of the same consciousness we have in the last lines of the verses which ask, like a child in the dark, whether there is any certainty of morning:

Will there really be a morning?  
Is there such a thing as day?  
Could I see it from the mountains  
If I were as tall as they?

Has it feet like water lilies?  
Has it feathers like a bird?  
Is it brought from famous countries  
Of which I have never heard?

O, some scholar! O, some sailor!  
O, some wise man from the skies!  
Please to tell a little pilgrim  
Where the place called morning lies!

We have called her "The Hermit Thrush of Amherst." The various members of the feathered tribes are by some fancied to have their counterparts in human singers differing in voice, and style, and temper. The garrulous chatter of the bobolink recalls some ballad which is nothing but versified loquacity. The refined trill and warble of the canary suggest the delicate sweetness of some feminine poetry. Even the kingfisher's shrill cry has the harsh quality of some rattling and rasping attempts at verse. To Emily Dickinson the nearest counterpart is probably that shy songster, the hermit thrush, that modest singer of New England woods, whose song is well described as "the voice of solitude suddenly breaking into sound," its notes pathetic, penetrating, almost spiritual, altogether above and apart from "the symphony to which the summer moves." This little bird, "so plainly dressed with robe of brown and spotted vest," hides alone in the forest or in the leafy cloister of some thick foliated tree, tells with simple art her sincere and solitary tale, and is heard with pleased ears by those who stray into woodland paths, but is seldom seen even by searching eyes. In public places, in the glare and glow, the pride and show of society, where the tanagers, gaudy in dress and jaunty in manners, scold and gossip the livelong day; or on city pavements, where that dirty immigrant, that noisy, turbulent, vicious little street Arab,

the English sparrow, quarrels and fights—in such places the hermit thrush is never seen. The hermit thrush, however, is almost a public character compared with Emily Dickinson. If, instead of singing its song, the thrush should write the score of it on a bit of birch bark and leave it to be found in the empty nest after its final departure, it would imitate the shyness and reserve of Emily Dickinson, the hermit thrush of Amherst.

When the miser dies people find his gold hidden somewhere about his house. After Miss Dickinson's death, in 1886, her hoarded treasure was found secreted in certain portfolios which were to her what Coleridge's notebooks were to him, concerning which he wrote to Wordsworth: "Since I left you my pocket notebooks have been my sole confidants, silent but never-failing friends; confidants who have not betrayed me, friends whose silence was not detraction, and before whom I was not ashamed to complain, to weep, or even to pray." Her sister, Miss Lavinia Dickinson, the sole surviving member of the household, found in Emily's portfolios hundreds of poetic effusions, neatly written and packeted, the furtive work of twenty invisible years. Five years after Emily's death this sister, with the literary aid of Colonel T. W. Higginson and Mrs. Todd, gave to the world a small book of verses selected from the mass, and a second series some time after, both subsequently issued

in one volume of two hundred and thirty pages, an edition of which was also issued in London. Three years after the publication of the poems, two volumes of her letters, even more racy and spicy than her verses, were printed. Higginson says the American public has had no equal literary surprise in recent years. No such odd, interesting, and undreamed of "find" has been unearthed as that which came to light from the private portfolios in which, as in a cave, this mysterious and, to the public, almost ghostly woman had buried her thoughts alive.

Schumann, the great musician, in the height of his fame, introduced the young Chopin to the public in a critical notice which opened with the exclamation, "Hats off, gentlemen; a Genius!" Frederick Wadmore says that "William Watson is a genius, a genius with Landorian terseness and dignity." Emily Dickinson has some dignity and more than Landorian terseness and pungency; but whether she was a genius we do not undertake to decide. She herself being once asked by an old servant what the word "genius" means, answered that nobody knows. Bliss Carman characterizes her as the "most original of all American women, with her dark pithy sayings, so oracular and yet so human too." Charles D. Warner, in the "Editor's Study" of Harper's Monthly, wrote: "If nothing else had come out of our American life but this strange poetry, we should feel that, in the work of Emily

Dickinson, America, or New England rather, had made a distinct addition to the literature of the world, and could not be left out of any record of it. To the understanding reader," says Mr. Warner, "these poems will form an intrinsic experience." What place ought to be assigned in literature to work so remarkable yet so elusive of criticism is a problem which Colonel Higginson says has not been solved. Dr. Holland, to whom she sent a few verses in her letters, thought them "too ethereal for publication." They reminded Mrs. Todd of "air-plants that have no roots in earth."

Whether they are entitled to be classed as poetry is unsettled, there being no established standard by which opposing opinions on such a question can be subdued into agreement. By the test she herself gave her verses are scarcely poetry. She said to Colonel Higginson: "If I read a book, and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way?" Most of us think there are other ways, although powerful poetry does often have some such effect. Mrs. Charles Kendall Adams says that the first time she read Browning's "Luria" her nerves did not get over it for a week. We have all read things which made us feel a tingle of soft lightning on the nerves and a blaze of burning phosphorus



in the brain. Whether Emily Dickinson be credited with genius and called, within her limitations, a true poet or not, her portfolio was a phonograph into which a most peculiar voice spoke uniquely original things, and through which a marked individuality bequeathed us verses of virginal freshness. It would not be effrontery in her to say, in the words of Burton, to the poets of the ages: "If I am not of the best, I am not the lowest of you."

When a new pen prints significant prose, or a new singer vocalizes verse, we at once begin to ask, "Of whom does this remind us?" and proceed to ransack literature and our minds for resemblances and contrasts. In such a search nothing is more refreshing than to find that the newcomer resembles nobody, is so unclassifiable as to form a class by herself, as is the case with Emily Dickinson. Whitman's barbaric yawp is scarcely more individual than her unborrowed idiom. One critic of her poems sees something like the "divine simplicity of William Blake"; W. D. Howells calls her "the New England palingenesis of Blake"; and another thinks he hears a haunting echo of Heinrich Heine, but her nearest congener is believed to be Emily Brontë. Miss Dickinson was familiar with the poetry of the strange woman who lived, and suffered, and died in the low gray-stone English rectory at Haworth: "Gigantic Emily Brontë," she calls her.

At Miss Dickinson's funeral, because they were favorite with her, it was deemed appropriate that Colonel Higginson should read Emily Brontë's "Last Lines"—lines "whose stern faith and solemn triumph show how mighty a force upheld her amid the rush of the dark waters." It is true that when we read that Charlotte Brontë accidentally discovering, in the autumn of 1845, some verses in manuscript written by her sister Emily, of which the author of "Jane Eyre" says, "They were not common effusions, nor at all like the poetry women generally write. I thought them condensed and terse, vigorous and genuine," we think the words equally descriptive of Emily Dickinson's verses. When Charlotte writes, "My sister Emily was not naturally gregarious but had a tendency to seclusion," and when we read that genius or something else made Emily Brontë an isolated spirit; that she never went to the village unless absolutely compelled; that, except to go to church or take lonely walks on the hills or over the desolate moor, she rarely crossed the threshold of home; that though her feeling for the people around was benevolent, intercourse with them was never sought by her nor, with few exceptions, ever experienced; that she always shrank from association with her kind except in two or three instances, and lived somewhat apart even in the narrow circle of her own family; that she labored at homely household tasks, doing all the ironing and most

of the cooking, so that passing villagers saw Emily Brontë in the kitchen kneading bread with an open book before her and her mastiff lying at her feet—we are indeed reminded of Emily Dickinson's peculiar disposition and habits.

But, after all, there was small similarity in their environment or their lives or their writings. Between the bare, comfortless Brontë parsonage and the spacious, comfortable New England mansion, fragrant with flowers inside and surrounded with the beauty of trees and blossoming shrubs; or between the bleak, ignorant, grimy Yorkshire village, set in a wild and sullen moor, and sweet Amherst, delightful with thrift and culture, set in one of the fairest and loveliest of landscapes—what resemblance? Around Emily Brontë everything was grim and repellent; around Emily Dickinson everything was charming and inviting; though this, to be sure, makes the self-seclusion of the latter the more mysterious. Emily Brontë had a shadowed childhood, an anxious girlhood, a womanhood on which scarce one gleam of sunshine fell, and a desolate life filled with despair of any earthly alleviation; and she was dead at twenty-nine. Emily Dickinson's was in no sense a strangled life, nor did her home or her sphere lack sunlight and cheer; and she lived to near threescore. The woman whose body lies in the little old church of Saint Austen, where under the chancel the Brontë family are buried and tableted, bore little resemblance to

the woman who, after a peaceful life, rests peacefully in the green cemetery at Amherst. On the one side Emily Dickinson could never have written a coarse, fierce, vulgar, brutal book like "Wuthering Heights," and on the other, Emily Brontë could never have written the verses, and, least of all, the blithe, breezy, buoyant letters, which issued from the gentle heart of our New England "hermit thrush." Nor is there any sign that Miss Dickinson ever imitated anybody's style. Her work is as scrupulously original as is implied in her own words, "I never consciously touch a paint mixed by another person." The only verses that have reminded us of hers were some from a younger singer, Helen Gray Cone, entitled "The Spring Beauties," the resemblance being chiefly in the spirit of the style:

The Puritan spring beauties stood freshly clad for church;  
A thrush, white-breasted, o'er them sat singing on his perch.

"Happy be! For fair are ye!" the gentle singer told them,  
But presently a buff-coat bee came booming up to scold them.

"Vanity, O vanity!  
Young maids, beware of vanity!"  
Grumbled out the buff-coat bee,  
Half parson-like, half soldierly.

The sweet-faced maidens trembled, with pretty pinky blushes,  
Convinced that it was wicked to listen to the thrushes;  
And when, that shady afternoon, I chanced that way to pass,  
They hung their little bonnets down and looked into the grass.

All because the buff-coat bee  
Lectured them so solemnly:  
"Vanity, O vanity!  
Young maids, beware of vanity!"

If that pretty bit of fancy in a different meter had fluttered out of Emily Dickinson's portfolio, nobody would have suspected that it was not born in the Amherst nest.

It strikes the reader quickly that her poetry is Northern and could not have been written under a Southern sun. The Northern nature is compact and hardy, sinewy and tough, like the ever-green standing unconquered on the edge of snow, of which Emily Dickinson writes:

The hemlock's nature thrives on cold;  
The gnash of northern winds  
Is sweetest nutriment to him,  
His best Norwegian wines.

The Northern mind is keen, incisive, tenacious; the Northern will is firm and flinty; the Northern speech is sharp, concise, abrupt; the Northern face is grim and resolute; the Northern life is frugal. The old Greek rule, "Nothing superfluous," was dictated in the latitude of Athens by chaste good taste in art and literature; in the latitude of Plymouth Rock the same rule is dictated by the severity of earth and sky. Emily Dickinson closes a terse and pithy letter to Colonel Higginson with, "Excuse the bleak simplicity which knew no tutor but the North." So indigenous, so characteristically Northern are her three hundred pieces of laconic poetry, none

large or long, some only four lines, that fancy has likened them to a row of icicles hanging from the eaves of an old-fashioned Massachusetts mansion, glittering in January sunshine with a trickle of sentiment melting down, cool and pure.

Not only northern latitude but Puritan faith and temperament helped to make this poetry. It is verse which should be able to trace its intellectual lineage back by some circuit to the deck of the Mayflower, or to some one of the colonies camped on the rock-bound snow-bound shores in 1620-50. Some fearless Puritan Priscilla must have dreamed the germinal beginnings of such poetry in white winter moonlights on that frozen coast. What but the stern Puritan demand for sincerity, veracity, reality could ever have inspired such lines as these?—

I like a look of agony,  
Because I know it's true;  
Men do not sham convulsion,  
Nor simulate a throe.

The eyes glaze once, and that is death.  
Impossible to feign  
The beads upon the forehead  
By homely anguish strung.

Carlyle would have liked that. Rigid self-restraint, repression, and economy are reckoned Puritan traits. In old England, Puritanism, from the reign of James I to the restoration of the Stuarts, subdued the emotional fervor of the Elizabethan era, so that passionate utterances

almost ceased in literature. In New England Puritanism, aided by the pinching hardships of a vigorous climate and a grudging soil, continued its effects on letters as on character. Years ago George William Curtis said of one of Hawthorne's articles in the *Atlantic Monthly*: "It is pure intellect, without emotion, without sympathy; as unhuman and passionless as a disembodied intelligence." Hawthorne himself once told W. D. Howells that the apparent coldness in the New England temperament was real, and that the suppression of emotion for generations, if it went on, would extinguish it at last. George W. Cable says that the best word he can find to express the difference between the Northerner and the Southerner is the word "economy" in its large sense. "The New Englander economizes himself at every turn. In the long run he has the advantage. He gets more out of life, just as he gets more out of the use of money, than the Southerner does." So thinks a Southerner resident now for some years in New England. Yankee frugality is parsimonious even of utterance; language as well as life is austere, compact, incisive, sententious. The habit of economy and the file of a sharp criticism reduce fine expression to its lowest terms, dispense with superlatives and superfluities and give to literature a close grain and a hard finish.

In addition, it is plain that Emily Dickinson holds a favorite New England doctrine that volu-

bility and gush are not signs of deepest emotion.  
Hear her:

Speech is a prank of Parliament,  
Tears a trick of the nerve,  
But the heart with the heaviest load on  
Steadies itself with reserve.

"Why the fullest heart is speechless is one of the great wherefores," she says, but so it is.

But neither a stern ancestry nor the nipping and eager air of a shrewdly biting climate had quenched emotion or diminished sensibility in our Amherst poetess, for her verse, so pale and frosty on the surface, is often warm with a deep underglow; at its brightest it is all a crackle with electric sparks that dart from a surcharged but rigidly repressed intensity. The dull leaden surface of a loaded Leyden jar is no evidence against the fiery force stored up within, saved and reserved against the necessary expressive moment. The heroic Puritan spirit which glories in silent endurance speaks in her lines upon "The Martyrs":

Through the straight path of suffering  
The martyrs even trod,  
Their feet upon temptation,  
Their faces upon God.  
A stately, shriven company;  
Convulsion playing round,  
Harmless as streaks of meteor  
Upon a planet's bound.  
Their faith, the everlasting troth,  
Their expectation fair;  
The needle to the north degree  
Wades so, through Polar air.



The habit of endurance and the benefit of discipline are heard in these lines:

I can wade grief,  
Whole pools of it—  
I'm used to that.  
But the least push of joy  
Breaks up my feet,  
And I tip, drunken.  
Let no pebble smile,  
'Twas the new liquor,  
That was all.

Power is only pain,  
Stranded through discipline  
Till weights will hang.  
Give balm to giants,  
And they'll wilt like men.  
Give Himmaleh,  
They'll carry him!

Certain it is that Emily Dickinson was a child of the north star and of the Mayflower.

(Of Walter Pater also it has been said that his ideals were Spartan; austerity in clear, lucid, windswept thought, even when wrought by it to the white heat of creative emotion, but an austerity that came from reserve force and from no timidity or coldness or sterility of deep feeling. He too lived far from the equator, and was as different from its children as pine from palm, as Puritan from Cavalier, as snow from orange blossoms.)

Readers of Emily Dickinson's verse may be some time in discovering that this eccentric and evasive being, this *sepolte vive* nun, is not an

unnatural feminine, but genuine womanly; that *Das ewig weibliche* is recurrent and fluent in her. So strong upon her is the habit of studious self-concealment that we seldom get sure straight sight of her inmost nature. Thus, for the most part, she hides her woman's heart with more than womanly sensitiveness and reserve, but now and then betrays it unawares. It is detected as dark eyes are caught peeping through from within the lattice of the pasha's house. The passer-by at the right moment can swear that inside that window, behind vines and veils, is a living, moving woman. The first poems we chanced to read seemed austere, bloodless, unimpassioned; and we were on the point of calling her "Our Lady of the Snows"; but, preparing so to christen her, we detected under this marmorean opalescence the flicker of a lambent tongue of flame and a glow as of a hidden bed of coals. At first a line from somewhere came to mind, "Her breast is fit for pearls if I were but a diver"; but before a successful diver could have found his pearls we knew they would not suit—they are too pale and mild; nor diamonds either, for they are incapable of reticence; they expose themselves too much, display their light and publish all that's in them; nor rubies, for they are too surface-red, too openly aflame. The opal is her only proper jewel, the opal with its pearly surface and its burning core, trying to hide a heart of fire under a show of being mild and colorless

and cold. This woman should have dressed in simple white and worn a large fire-opal at her throat. Discovering this cryptic fire in her poems was a surprise like seeing a silent flash of lightning dart down a slope of winter moonlight; and instantly we said, "Ah, Emily, we know you better now." In her Northern bosom this Puritan maiden bore no lump of ice, no pulseless stone, no burned-out cinder, no dead ashes, but a true woman's pure, warm heart, looking into the great lovingness of which one must whisper reverently, "O, the depth of the riches!"

One thing which her biographers tell us about Emily Dickinson is somewhat difficult of belief. They say there was in her life no love sorrow, no blighted affection, no disappointment in love. If this be true, then she had no love experience. It may be so, but the thirty-five poems classified by her editors under the head of "Love" certainly show a deep capacity and an imagination familiar with the theme. However free and unentangled her affections may have been, her spirit is on intimate terms with the eternal masculine. Did she merely dream abstractly without ever tasting love in reality, or are there shy and veiled or unintentional confessions in and between the lines? Unless nearly twoscore poems are all make-believe, love was an Eden to this woman's soul. Was it an Eden never entered, or was it a Paradise Lost?

Look at her picture of a woman's way with

the letter she gets—running away to her room with it lest somebody see it, and locking the door to read it: then she reads in it how infinite she is to—well, never mind to whom—to “nobody that you know,” and then she “sighs for lack of heaven, but not the heaven the creeds bestow.” In the poem entitled “Renunciation” there are two who met, passed the sacramental hour of self-revelation which “maketh all things new,” then parted because their lives led opposite ways; two who now look beyond crucifixion to a resurrection and a “new marriage justified through Calvaries of love,” to find after long parting a heaven in “the privilege of one another’s eyes,” and in a bridal “before the judgment-seat of God” with cherubim and seraphim for the familiar guests. Other verses also dream of the bliss of claiming one another there by right of the soul’s white election, with heaven’s royal seal upon a charter which can never know repeal while the long ages steal. And here is what one says who is too impatient to endure the postponement of the hoped-for celestial reunion :

What if I say, I will not wait?  
What if I burst the fleshly gate  
And pass escaped to thee?  
What if I file this mortal off,  
See where it hurt me—that’s enough—  
And wade in liberty?

And elsewhere adds that if she were sure of finding him at once in the other world, she would toss this life away like a rind and taste eternity. Does

not this recall what she wrote Colonel Higginson—"I had a friend who taught me immortality; but venturing too near, himself, he never returned"? And who was the man of whom she wrote, "I found one more, but he was not contented I be his scholar, so he left the land"? When Professor Fowler's daughter had married Mr. Gordon L. Ford and gone away, Miss Dickinson writes her thus about her feelings in witnessing the ceremony:

Dear E., when it came, and, hidden by your veil, you stood before us all and made those promises, and when we kissed you and went back to our homes, it seemed to me translation, not any earthly thing, and if, a little after, you'd ridden on the wind, it would not have surprised me.

Again and again in her verses her imagination lives through the transition from girl to wife in a vivid and realistic way. In "Love's Baptism" a woman contrasts her christening with her marriage, each ceremony being the giving of a name. In the first her baptismal name given by parents was dropped by the minister upon her face with water in the country church. Of that name, given without her choice, the bride says she has finished using it,

And they can put it with my dolls,  
My childhood, and the string of spools  
I've finished threading too.

Marriage is the baptism with a new name, received by a man's gift, yet consciously chosen also by one who stands erect and adequate with

power to choose or to reject and who chooses just a throne and takes her name supreme, as life, hither only crescent, rounds now to its full and existence's whole arc is filled up. In verses entitled "The Contrast" speaks the woman who, knowing the step means mutual risk, it may be mutual gain, knowing she may be disappointed in him, or herself prove poorer in herself than he suspects, yet makes the venture and with sacred gladness says:

I gave myself to him,  
And took himself for pay.  
The solemn contract of a life  
Was ratified that way.

Here is the musing of a woman who has ceded herself, finished her girlhood and become a wife:

How odd the girl's life looks  
Behind this soft eclipse!  
I think that earth seems so  
To those in heaven now.  
This being comfort, then  
That other kind was pain;  
But why compare?  
I'm wife! Stop there!

Once or twice the thought is suggested that if Emily Dickinson had no actual love experience, perhaps she was in sight of one. Take these lines,

Within my reach!  
I could have touched!  
I might have chanced that way!  
Soft sauntered thro' the village,  
Sauntered as soft away!

And put them along with these:

At least it solaces to know  
That there exists a gold,  
Although I prove it just in time  
Its distance to behold;  
Its far, far treasure to surmise  
And estimate the pearl  
That slipped my simple fingers through  
While just a girl at school.

But whatever she has lost or missed she is not soured and embittered. She makes merry in more than one letter over her sister Vinnie's story of a breach-of-promise case in which the whole evidence consisted of a letter which the girl herself had written in answer to one she always expected but never received. She was not an acidulous spinster, an unnatural man-hater, a cynic about love, but a sweet-hearted, true and wholesome woman, immensely capable of the noblest of all affections, and not without deep and holy dreams of it floating about in her most secret soul among the subtle blisses of her conscious might-have-beens; these she now and then whispers, in sly self-betrayals, to the only confidante she has—her portfolio—to which she sometimes uncovers what is kept covered from all the world besides.

The quotations we have made by no means exhaust the love-dream material she gives us. The two verses named "Apotheosis," about "the fainting bee reaching late his flower," are too dearly sacred to quote, and the same is true of

the half-coquettish, wholly womanly verses about "The Letter," and the others called "Surrender," as also of the eight lines on "Possession," which we dare not recite. But think of this shy woman living them out in her thoughts and writing them! For a last quotation on this point take a woman's description of the lordly manner of the man who is proud as Lucifer that she is his:

He put the belt around my life,  
I heard the buckle snap;  
And he turned away imperial,  
My lifetime folding up.  
Deliberate, as a duke would do  
A kingdom's title deed.

We are aware that all these love poems may be proof not of fact but only of possibility. If she could write of marriage as she did, though she lived and died unwedded, then she could write of love without any real love chapter in her history. Others have done like things. Hawthorne could depict the emotions of the guilty without having felt such guilt himself. His wife said, "He has always seemed to me in his remote moods like a stray seraph who had experienced in his own life no evil, but by the intuition of a divine intellect saw and sorrowed over all evil." Miracles of insight and creation are possible to the mind. We are told that when Anthony Hope wrote "The Dolly Dialogues" he had never met a grande dame, and his knowledge of the world of women was confined to his



mother's quiet rectory drawing-room, and the companionship of several demure elderly sisters. The gay scintillating butterflies in his book, like delicious Lady Dolly, were simply creatures of his vivid fancy, unassisted by either experience or observation. For ten long years he sat in his poor shabby little law office, forgetting all about his profession, spinning airy romances of social intrigue that breathe the very bouquet of aristocratic frivolity. Never having come in contact with a mondaine, he divined her by instinct, gauged her capacities, and knew precisely what she would say and do under any given circumstances. It seems scarcely credible that imagination alone supplied each detail with this infallible accuracy.

Yes, it is possible, in spite of her love poems, that Miss Dickinson had no love experience. A situation may be best understood and most glowingly portrayed from the outside. The joys of a farmer's life may be most beautifully depicted by an unagricultural person; the pleasures of early rising magnified by a poet fond of lying late in bed; and the dearness of "Home, Sweet Home," sung most touchingly by a homeless man. Nevertheless, reports persist in private circles that there was an affair of the heart in Emily Dickinson's life.

It is time to turn to some of her poems. Our first taste of her quality was from seeing quoted here and there such bits as this:

Presentiment is that long shadow on the lawn  
Indicative that suns go down;  
A signal to the startled grass  
That darkness is about to pass.

And these noble lines:

If I can stop one heart from breaking,  
I shall not live in vain;  
If I can ease one life its aching,  
Or cool one pain,  
Or help one fainting robin  
Unto his nest again,  
I shall not live in vain.

And this:

Belshazzar had a letter—  
He never had but one;  
Belshazzar's correspondent  
Concluded and begun  
In that immortal copy  
Which the conscience of us all  
Can read without its glasses  
On revelation's wall.

And this:

The pedigree of honey  
Does not concern the bee;  
A clover, any time, to him  
Is aristocracy.

And this, in which she imagines what a blind person might feel and say about the privilege of sight. Says the blind person:

Were it told to me to-day  
That I might have the sky  
For mine, I tell you that my heart  
Would split, in spite of me.

The meadows mine, the mountains mine,  
All forests, stintless stars,  
As much of noon as I could take  
With my two finite eyes?

The motions of the dipping birds,  
The lightning's jointed road,  
For mine, to look at when I liked?—  
The news would strike me dead!

And this about the snake, and that instant shiver,  
that shock and constriction, that sense of suffoca-  
tion we have all felt at sudden sight of one:

A narrow fellow in the grass  
Occasionally rides;  
You may have met him—did you not?  
His notice sudden is.

The grass divides as with a comb,  
A spotted shaft is seen;  
And then it closes at your feet  
And opens further on.

He likes a boggy acre,  
A floor too cool for corn.  
But when a child and barefoot,  
I more than once, at morn,

Have passed, I thought, a whiplash  
Unbraiding in the sun—  
When, stooping to secure it,  
It wrinkled, and was gone.

Several of nature's people  
I know, and they know me;  
I feel for them a transport  
Of cordiality;

But I never met this fellow,  
Attended or alone,  
Without a tighter breathing  
And zero at the bone.

And this description of the railway train :

I like to see it lap the miles,  
And lick the valleys up,  
And stop to feed itself at tanks,  
And then, prodigious, step  
Around a pile of mountains,  
And, supercilious, peer  
In shanties by the sides of roads;  
And then a quarry pare  
To fit its sides, and crawl between,  
Complaining all the while  
In horrid hooting stanza,  
Then chase itself downhill,  
And neigh like Boanerges;  
Then, punctual as a star,  
Stop, docile and omnipotent,  
At its own stable door.

Keen was the joy of Emily Dickinson in nature, in the eternal pageant of the seasons, and not inconsiderable was her power of apt and novel description. The sense of beauty is so precious a thing that no one is nobler by lacking it, richer by losing it, happier by repressing it, or injured by cultivating it. Forth amid the infinite charm and wonder of the world God has sent some souls so sensitive and responsive, so capable of rapture, that for them not to feel and in some way utter their feelings is impossible. As well expect the struck bell to give forth no sound; or the taut strings of a Stradivarius to be motionless and dumb when Ole Bull draws the rosined bow across them: as well forbid "the mountain pines to wag their high tops and to make a noise when they are fretted with the gusts of heaven."

Gradgrind and Peter Bell, the yellow primrose man, have no better right to standing room upon this prosy planet than have the poets whose delicate senses flush in ruddy response to every pleasure-giving touch and palpitate with instant admiration at every fine achievement of the Maker who is himself the great ποιητης. He who splendors the universe with beauty, and decorates earth and heaven with flowers and rainbows, and softens the grim rocks with vines and mosses, and by the lure of sunsets lifts our eyes above the plowed ground, has created in his own image and likeness some sensitive children whose nerves quiver and whose pulses shake when down in the dell Pan's pipes are sounding and all the creatures of the woods dance to the dainty measures; whose keen appreciation magnifies the smallest things as with a microscope, and whom delight often visits upon tiny wings. When the right season summons, when all nature is a chorus choir, when on every side rapturous birds sing loud and demure little birds sing low, human singers have no duty to be silent, though their strain be only some short swallow-flight of song, brief and repetitious as Tennyson's little bird which has but one small passage of few notes and sings it o'er and o'er through all the changes of a summer's day. The poet's song is as lawful as that of the lark trying to translate the sky into terms, or the nightingale telling what the evening means, or the overbubbling

bobolink explaining what it is to be a winged ecstasy. What means the old myth about Memnon's statue giving forth music when touched by the sunrise, except that the spectacle of morning is glorious enough to make even a graven image sing?

Emily Dickinson paid God the homage of worshipping him in his handiwork which she interpreted to others. She curiously counts

How many notes there be  
In the new robin's ecstasy  
Among astonished boughs!  
How many trips the tortoise makes!  
How many cups the bee partakes!  
That debauchee of dews.

She

Dips the sunset in a cup,  
Reckons the morning's flagons up,  
And tells how deep the dew;  
Measures how far the morning leaps,  
And asks what time the weaver sleeps  
Who weaves the breadths of blue.

She knows the precise time when the bird chorister wakes up his choir and softly starts the morning concert in the leafy loft:

At half-past three a single bird  
Unto a silent sky  
Propounded but a single term  
Of cautious melody.

She further narrates what happened at sunrise:

I'll tell you how the sun rose,  
A ribbon at a time,  
The steeples swam in amethyst,  
The news like squirrels ran.

The hills untied their bonnets,  
The bobolinks begun.  
Then I said softly to myself,  
"That must have been the Sun!"

The departing day seems to her homely fancy  
like a careless housekeeper who has left things  
in a litter and is called after to come back and  
finish her work:

She sweeps with many-colored brooms,  
And leaves the shreds behind;  
O, housewife in the evening West,  
Come back and dust the pond!  
You dropped a purple ravelling in,  
You dropped an amber thread;  
And now you've littered all the East  
With duds of emerald!

She watched the bluebirds' coming, learned the date of hyacinth and goldenrod, she overheard "the state affairs of birds, the lore of dawn and dusk," all that "the wind said in the treetops—fine, unfathomed things" which set themselves to language and to rhythm in her brain. She thinks the lily, possibly, the most captivating of floral forms, and feels chagrined for Solomon that he could not compare with it in glory: Jesus, it seems, was enthralled by the lily, and she herself is so in love with it, she says, that if she were sure no one was looking she might make those advances of which in after life she would repent.

Of one of the earliest and lowliest of summer's harbingers she says: "The dandelion's pallid tube astonishes the grass, and then uplifts a signal

bud, and then a shouting flower—the proclamation of the sun that sepulture is o’er.” To her the spring is nature’s annual reply to Nicodemus’s mystification over the new birth; and the robin is a Gabriel in humble circumstances, whose springtime note is a trump of resurrection to buried flowers; his dress denotes him as belonging to the working classes; he has the punctuality of a New England farmer, a small but sturdy residence, and a self-denying household. Compare her descriptive art with that of Aldrich. This is his stanza:

Hark! ’tis the bluebird’s venturous strain,  
High on the old fringed elm at the gate—  
Sweet-voiced, valiant on the swaying bough,  
Alert, elate,  
Dodging the fitful spits of snow;  
New England’s poet laureate  
Telling us spring has come again.

And these are hers, far less hackneyed and having a certain breeziness, an informal bluff camaraderie:

Before you thought of spring  
Except as a surmise,  
You see, God bless his suddenness,  
A fellow in the skies  
Of independent hues,  
A little weather-worn,  
Inspiriting habiliments  
Of indigo and brown.  
With specimens of song,  
As if for you to choose,  
Discretion in the interval,  
With gay delays he goes



To some superior tree  
Without a single leaf,  
And shouts for joy to nobody  
But his seraphic self!

Very apt are her lines about that fearless militant and hardy visitor, the blue jay, playfellow of snow squalls and evergreens;

No brigadier throughout the year  
So civic as the jay.  
A neighbor and a warrior too,  
With shrill felicity  
Pursuing winds that censure us,  
A February day.  
The brother of the universe  
Is never blown away.

For a contrast illustrating not only how *en rapport* she is with the vital gladness of nature, but how she catches character and distinguishes quality in nature's various children, take her characterization of "that confiding prodigal, the blissful oriole":

So drunk, he disavows it  
With badinage divine;  
So dazzling we mistake him  
For an alighting mine.  
A pleader, a dissembler,  
An epicure, a thief—  
Betimes an oratorio,  
An ecstasy in chief;  
The splendor of a Burmah,  
The meteor of birds,  
Departing like a pageant  
Of ballads and of bards.

Of her description of the humming bird in eight brilliant meteoric lines Colonel Higginson says

that nothing in literature so condenses into a few words that gorgeous atom of flashing life and fire:

A route of evanescence  
With a revolving wheel;  
A resonance of emerald,  
A rush of cochineal;  
And every blossom on the bush  
Adjusts its tumbled head—  
The mail from Tunis, probably,  
An easy morning's ride.

Doubtless those lines express as well as words can the bit of color, blurred by swiftness, the whirr of darting motion, the instantaneous dive and onset which probes and jostles the flowers, and in the twinkling of an eye is gone again; in one same moment visitor and absentee, coincidence of advent and alibi.

The following bit is counted among her best by her chosen critic, because of its "singular felicity of phrase and an aerial lift that bears the ear upward with the bee it traces":

The nearest dream recedes unrealized.  
The heaven we chase,  
Like the June bee  
Before the schoolboy,  
Invites the race,  
Stoops to an easy clover,  
Dips—evades—teases—deploys—  
Then to the royal clouds  
Lifts his light primace,  
Heedless of the boy  
Staring bewildered at the mocking sky.

The half-sacred but wholly buoyant merriment,

with which she drinks the sunlight and the air,  
exults in these characteristic verses:

I taste a liquor never brewed  
From tankards scooped in pearl;  
Not all the vats upon the Rhine  
Yield such an alcohol!

Inebriate of air am I,  
And debauchee of dew,  
Reeling, through endless summer days,  
From inns of molten blue.

When landlords turn the drunken bee  
Out of the foxglove's door,  
When butterflies renounce their drams,  
I shall but drink the more!

Till seraphs swing their snowy hats,  
And saints to windows run,  
To see this little tippler  
Leaning against the sun!

In her solemn and stately fancy Indian summer is the final sacrament of summer days, the rite of extreme unction to the season, a kind of last communion in the haze, while softly through the altered air hurries a timid leaf. And quickly after come the beclouded days, when

The sky is low, the clouds are mean,  
A traveling flake of snow  
Across a barn or through a rut  
Debates if it will go;  
And a narrow wind complains all day  
How some one treated him.

In four lines she tersely sketches November's icy advent:

A few incisive mornings,  
A few ascetic eves—  
Gone Mr. Bryant's goldenrod,  
And Mr. Thomson's sheaves.

She notes that there is no dread or pain in vegetation's end:

Apparently with no surprise  
To any happy flower,  
The frost beheads it at its play  
In accidental power.  
The blond assassin passes on,  
The sun proceeds unmoved  
To measure off another day  
For an approving God.

She tells us how softly the summer sometimes departs:

As imperceptibly as grief  
The summer lapsed away,  
Too imperceptible at last  
To seem like perfidy.  
And thus without a wing  
Or service of a keel,  
Our summer made her light escape  
Into the beautiful.

And this is her account of the dead summer's obsequies:

It was a short procession—  
The bobolink was there,  
An aged bee addressed us,  
And then we knelt in prayer.  
We trust that she was willing;  
We ask that we may be.  
Summer, sister, seraph,  
Let us go with thee!  
In the name of the bee,  
And of the butterfly,  
And of the breeze. Amen!

Nature's wilder and rougher moods shook all her nerves and shocked her with a kind of awful pleasure. This is her "Thunderstorm":

The wind begun to rock the grass  
With threatening tunes and low;  
He flung a menace at the earth,  
A menace at the sky.

The leaves unhooked themselves from trees  
And started all abroad;  
The dust did scoop itself like hands  
And throw away the road.

The wagons quickened on the streets,  
The thunder hurried slow;  
The lightning showed a yellow beak  
And then a livid claw.

The birds put up the bars to nests,  
The cattle fled to barns;  
There came one drop of giant rain,  
And then, as if the hands

That held the dams had parted hold,  
The waters wrecked the sky  
That overlooked my father's house,  
Just quartering a tree.

Not unlike this is another "Storm":

It sounded as if the streets were running,  
And then the streets stood still.  
Eclipse was all we could see at the window,  
And awe was all we could feel.  
By and by the boldest stole out of his covert,  
To see if time was there.  
Nature was in her beryl apron,  
Mixing fresher air.

Religion in Emily Dickinson's poetry and letters fills a considerable space. Her childhood

was under that regime of which Lowell said, "New England was all meetinghouse when I was growing up." The church and its services held a central place and dominated the life of the town. Interest in preaching was great. In womanhood she writes of her memories of the old meetinghouse where she used to fall "asleep with the bumblebees and the Lord God of Elijah." From Mount Holyoke Seminary the boarding-school miss of seventeen writes her brother:

Professor Smith preached here last Sabbath, and such sermons I never heard in my life. We were all charmed with him and dreaded to have him close.

From Amherst, at twenty-one, also, in a letter to Austin Dickinson:

We had such a splendid sermon from Professor Park: I never heard anything like it, and don't expect to again till we stand before the great white throne and he reads from the book, the Lamb's book. The students and chapel people all came to our church, and it was very full, and so still the buzzing of a fly would have boomed like a cannon. And when it was all over and that wonderful man sat down, people stared at each other, and looked wan and wild, as if they had seen a spirit, and wondered they had not died.

The young woman of twenty-three one autumn Sunday afternoon wrote Dr. Holland and wife:

The minister to-day—not our own minister—preached about death and judgment, and what would become of those (meaning brother Austin and me) who behaved improperly; and, somehow, the sermon scared me, and father and Vinnie looked very solemn, as if the whole was true, and I would not for worlds have them know that it troubled me; but I longed to come to you and tell you

all about it, and learn how to be better. He preached such an awful sermon, though, that I didn't much think I should ever see you again until the Judgment Day, and then you wouldn't speak to me, according to his story. The subject of perdition seemed to please him. It seems very solemn to me.

One sermon about this time appears to have taken practical effect on this young woman, for on Monday morning she solemnly resolved she would be sensible, so she "wore thick shoes, and thought of Dr. Humphrey and the moral law." Another letter says:

The loveliest sermon I ever heard was about the disappointment of Jesus in Judas. It was told like a mortal story of intimate young men. I suppose no surprise we can have will be so sick as that one.

One or two allusions make us think she heard some preaching about as dry and innutritious as that of O. W. Holmes's father, of whom one of his deacons said, "He fed us sawdust with a spoon." Occasionally we have a glimpse of the religious life of the village like this: "There is what is called an 'awakening' in the church, and I know of no choicer ecstasy than to see Mrs. — roll out in crape every morning, I suppose to intimidate antichrist; at least it would have that effect on me." She did not always go to meeting; in the last twenty years of her life she went nowhere. Some time in those years she wrote:

Some keep the Sabbath going to church;  
I keep it staying at home;  
With a bobolink for a chorister,  
And an orchard for a dome.

God preaches—a noted Clergyman—  
And the sermon is never long;  
So instead of getting to heaven at last,  
I'm going all along.

Sometimes she criticizes the preachers:

He preached upon "breadth" till it argued him narrow—  
The broad are too broad to define—  
And of "truth" until it proclaimed him a liar—  
The truth never flaunted a sign.

Simplicity fled from his counterfeit presence  
As gold the pyrites would shun.  
What confusion would cover the innocent Jesus  
To meet so enabled a man!

Her own religious life is indubitably real, and no more eccentric than the rest of her. Her mind is independent and her attitude fearless but deeply reverent. The girl of sixteen says, "I have perfect confidence in God and his promises, and yet I feel that the world holds a predominant place in my affections." The girl of twenty: "God is here, looking into my very soul to see if I think right thoughts. Yet I am not afraid, for I try to be right and good; and he knows every one of my struggles. He looks very glorious, and everything bright seems dull beside him; and I don't dare look directly at him for fear I shall die." Here is one of her struggles. She was disappointed in some dear wish by a duty which she was tempted to put aside for the sake of a pleasure, and she writes:

O, I struggled with great temptation, and it cost me much of denial; but in the end I conquered—not a glorious



victory, where you hear the rolling drum, but a kind of helpless victory, with faintest music, weary soldiers, no waving flag nor long, loud shout. I have read of Christ's temptations, and how they were like our own, only he didn't sin. I wondered if one was like mine, and whether he got angry. I couldn't make up my mind; do you think he ever did? . . . What shall we do, my darling, when trial grows more and more, when the dim lone light expires, and it's dark, so very dark, and we wander and know not where, and cannot get out of the forest. Whose is the hand to help us and guide us forever? They talk of a "Jesus of Nazareth"—will you tell me if it be he?

At twenty-one she writes a schoolmate: "We are very small, A——. I think we grow still smaller—this tiny insect life the portal to another; it seems strange indeed. I'm afraid we are all unworthy, yet we shall 'enter in.'" And then follows this enigmatic confession: "The shore is safer, A——, but I love to buffet the sea. I can count the bitter wrecks in these pleasant waters, but O, I love the danger! You are learning control and firmness. Christ Jesus will love you more. I'm afraid he don't love me any!" Speaking of her friends, she says: "I hope no change or time will blight these loves of ours. I would bear them all in my arms to my home in the glorious heaven and say, 'Hear am I, my Father, and those whom thou hast given me.' If the life which is to come is better than dwelling here, and angels are there, and our friends are glorified, need we fear to go when spirits beyond await us?" She believed, she said, "the love of God could be so taught as not to seem

like bears." Dr. Holland's prayer at family worship gave her a feeling of sunshine and warmth, and made her think "that God must be a *Friend*; that is a different God." Perhaps she was thinking of the prayers of some people who, as she described it, "address an eclipse, which they call father," meaning, we judge, that there seemed nothing near, direct, or intimate in it, no face-to-face communion. She was impressed that Dr. Holland was on simple, confiding, childlike terms with the Father in heaven. In a brilliant letter to Samuel Bowles (of the Springfield Republican) she refers to the somewhat oppressive stateliness of the resurrection life as described by the clergy, thus: "To the natural man bumblebees would seem an improvement, and a spicing of birds, but far be it from me to impugn such majestic tastes. Our pastor says we are a 'worm.' Do you think we shall 'see God'? Can you think of Abraham strolling with him in genial promenade?" "They say that God is everywhere, yet we always think of him as something of a recluse."

Mrs. Bowles sent her one Christmas a little book containing selections from Theodore Parker. Emily, sending her thanks, adds: "I never read before anything that Mr. Parker wrote. I heard that he was 'poison.' I like this poison very well. Brother Austin stayed from service yesterday afternoon, and I found him reading my Christmas gift. I wish the 'faith of the fath-

ers' didn't wear brogans and carry blue umbrellas."

As life goes on she learns something of its tragedies, and sometimes doubt, like a mosquito, buzzes around her faith, but there is nowhere even a momentary approach to the feeling of poor Teufelsdröckh's words in *Sartor Resartus*: "I ended by living in a continual indefinite pining fear—tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what. It seemed as if all things in the heavens above and the earth beneath would hurt me; as if the heavens and the earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I, palpitating, lay waiting to be devoured."

Living a sheltered life, believing in good and not in evil, she had the fearlessness of an innocent child. The woman of forty tells Colonel Higginson: "When much in the woods, as a little girl, I was told that the snake would bite me, that I might pick a poisonous flower or goblins kidnap me; but I went along and met no one but angels, who were far shyer of me than I could be of them, so I haven't that confidence in fraud and expectation of evil which many exercise." She doesn't seem to be much troubled by the devil. She had been warned of his attacks, but writes her cousin: "I read in a tremendous Book about an 'enemy,' and armed a fort to scatter him away. The time has passed and years have come, and yet not any 'Satan.' I think he

must be making war upon some other nation." She says her heart is a place "where the wicked cease from troubling." Sometimes without the least disposition to distrust, she wishes for greater certainty:

This timid life of evidence keeps pleading "I don't  
know."

The house of supposition,  
The glimmering frontier  
That skirts the acres of perhaps,  
To me shows insecure.

To Miss Whitney, an old friend, she writes: "You are like God. We pray to him, and he answers, 'No.' Then we pray to him to rescind the 'No,' and he don't answer at all. Yet 'Seek and ye shall find' is the boon of faith." She has spiritual certitudes enough. She is sure that when it is too late for man to help us it is early yet for God, and when creation is impotent we still have prayer, which

Is the little implement  
Through which men reach  
Where presence is denied them.  
They fling their speech  
By means of it in God's ear;  
If, then, he hear,  
That sums the apparatus  
Comprised in prayer.

She cannot doubt the perpetuity of existence: "The only home we know is consciousness"; and "no vacillating God ignited this abode to put it out." One poem says:

I cannot see my soul, but know 'tis there;  
Nor ever saw his house or furniture  
Who has invited me with him to dwell.

But she consults what raiment will honor him the most when she becomes his guest, desiring to "be adequately dressed," to have the wedding garment on. Another poem has this similar utterance:

I never saw a moor,  
I never saw the sea;  
Yet know I how the heather looks  
And what a wave must be.

I never spoke with God,  
Nor visited in heaven;  
Yet certain am I of the spot  
As if the chart were given.

Some of her thoughts about heaven are given in a letter which the woman of twenty-six wrote on a summer Sunday evening:

Don't tell, dear Mrs. Holland, but, wicked as I am, I read my Bible, and in it as I read to-day, I found a verse like this, where friends should "go no more out"; and there were "no tears," and I wished as I sat down to-night that we were *there*—not *here*—and that wonderful world had commenced, which makes such promises, and I were by your side, with the "hundred and forty and four thousand" (chatting pleasantly, yet not disturbing us). And I'm half tempted to take my seat in that paradise of which the good man writes, and begin forever and ever *now*. My only sketch of heaven is a large, blue sky, bluer and larger than the *biggest* I have seen in June, and in it are my friends—all of them, every one of them—those who are with me now, and those who were "parted" as we walked, and "snatched up to heaven." If roses had not faded, and frosts had never come, and one had not fallen here and

another there whom I could not waken, there were no need of other heaven than this one below; and if God had been here this summer and seen the things I saw—I guess he would think his upper paradise superfluous. Don't tell him, though, for the world; for, after all he's said about it, I should like to see what he *was* building for us with no hammer, and no stone, and no journeyman either. Pardon my sanity, Mrs. Holland, in a world *insane*, and love me if you will, for I had rather be loved than to be called a king in earth or a lord in heaven.

Patient submission and trust have place in various verses such as these:

I reason, earth is short,  
And anguish absolute,  
And many hurt;  
But what of that?

I reason that in heaven,  
Somehow, it will be even,  
Some new equation given.

I shall know why, when time is over,  
And I have ceased to wonder why;  
Christ will explain each separate anguish  
In the fair schoolroom of the sky.

He will tell me what Peter promised,  
And I, for wonder at his woe,  
I shall forget the drop of anguish  
That scalds me now, that scalds me now.

Another day, in a naïve mixture of playfulness and trust, she intimates her willingness to have God keep the secrets of the skies till he sees fit to reveal them:

The skies can't keep their secret!  
They tell it to the hills,  
The hills just tell the orchards,  
And they the daffodils.

A bird, by chance, that goes that way,  
Soft overheard the whole.  
If I should bribe that little bird,  
Who knows but she would tell?

I think I won't, however;  
It's finer not to know.  
So keep your secret, Father!  
I would not, if I could,  
Know what the sapphire fellows do  
In your new-fashioned world.

Here is the voice of holy aspiration. Among the flowers that turn their faces ever to the sun—daisies, sunflowers, heliotropes—she looks up to whom but God?—and says:

We are the flowers, Thou the sun!  
Forgive us if as days decline  
We nearer steal to thee!

In the lines prompted by the stories in the "Book of Martyrs," beginning,

Read, sweet, how others strove,  
Till we are stouter,

we have a glimpse of a strenuous spiritual life. And an intensity as of a hunted and helpless soul is in this abrupt, breathless, and exigent appeal:

At least to pray is left, is left.  
O Jesus! In the air  
I know not which thy chamber is—  
I'm knocking everywhere.

Thou stirrest earthquake in the South,  
And maelstrom in the sea;  
Say, Jesus Christ of Nazareth,  
Hast thou no arm for me?

She speaks of "that sheltering passage, 'who loved us and gave himself for us,'" and believes that death and resurrection will carry us past midnight, past the morning star, past sunrise to the day when we will be identified and know as we are known. At the end of our route Eternity waves a white flag, signaling us to come on, and from the excellent heaven "the face of our old neighbor, God," smiles hospitable welcome. We add three verses on "Immortality":

This world is not conclusion;  
A sequel stands beyond,  
Invisible as music,  
But positive as sound.

It beckons and it baffles;  
Philosophies don't know,  
And through a riddle at the last  
Sagacity must go.

To prove it puzzles scholars;  
To gain it men have worn  
Contempt of generations  
And crucifixion borne.

If we had not her letters, but only her verses, some things in them would make us feel that, whatever else she may have been, a normal and healthy human being she surely was not. For one sign, she interviews grim things with unnatural composure. She would shake hands with a skeleton as calmly as if his hard fingers were soft and warm with flesh. In much that she wrote she is death's familiar. More than any writer we know her imagination visits among the



buried people; she was unduly intimate with them, kept fancying how they were getting on through the moldy years down under the marble and under the sod, roomed with them, one might say, in their narrow apartments: and all this in a matter-of-fact sort of way without horror, as in dreams one sees and does the strangest things without any feeling of strangeness. She seems like a somnambulist in a churchyard, entering vaults and lying down on the shelves like a recumbent marble saint; and the unaccountable thing is that to her there is nothing ghastly or uncanny in all this. It is hard to keep from saying that it is not in woman nature to be so incapable of shudder and shiver; that in maidenhood or womanhood some accident befell this writer—somehow, somewhere, she must have had a blow that tipped her so that her mind, while acute and preternaturally cool, was never quite plumb after that. Of all poets that ever wrote of death and the dead, none talked of them in such a way as she. She is not haunted by Poe's sense of "the dishonor of the grave," nor is there any "smell of the charnel house" in what she writes. Ruskin in his youth indulged in metrical effusions, most of them dating from Christ Church College, Oxford, and pervaded by weird thoughts and a grim churchyardy aspect. They were made into a little volume in 1850, a copy of which recently brought over two hundred dollars, in London. We speak heresy, but the

truth. Emily Dickinson's are worth more than Ruskin's. Hers are not melancholy or gruesome. She has nothing to do with ghouls, goblins, and ghosts in graveyards, but only with the dear blessed buried people, whose lot she no way bewails. The tomb is a closet the sexton keeps the key to, where he puts up our bodies on the shelf, like quaint or broken porcelain cups discarded by the housewife. She thinks of the grave as a snug harbor from storms. Hear her :

The clouds their backs together laid,  
The north began to push,  
The forests galloped till they fell,  
The lightning skipped like mice;  
The thunder crumbled like a stuff—  
How good to be safe in tombs,  
Where nature's temper cannot reach,  
Nor vengeance ever comes!

A similar thought is this:

Some too fragile for winter winds  
The thoughtful grave incloses;  
Never the treasures in her nest  
The cautious grave exposes.

Who but Emily Dickinson would ever have written this?—

I died for beauty, but was scarce  
Adjusted in the tomb  
When one who died for truth was laid  
In an adjoining room.

He questioned softly why I failed.  
"For beauty," I replied.  
"And I for truth—the two are one—  
We brethren are," he said.

And so as kinsmen met a-night,  
We talked between the rooms,  
Until the moss had reached our lips  
And covered up our names.

Who that has noticed the ineffably sweet submissiveness which smiles often on the faces of the dead can fail to feel the tender felicity of the phrase which speaks of them as "the meek members of the resurrection"? Toward some of them she (but not she alone) has thoughts of self-reproach, and knows the pang of offering appreciation too late:

I went to thank her, but she slept,  
Her bed a funneled stone,  
With nosebags at the head and foot,  
That travelers had thrown  
Who went to thank her;  
But she slept.

Funerals and burials are sacred and lofty ceremonials to her. She feels the dignity of death and of that solemn pageant which moves along at the end of every life, so that none can pass pompless away; the lowliest career wending its way to that important day when the world will step deferentially aside to let the stately retinue go by to the inviolable keep and donjon underground. She is half awestruck, half elated at the eclat of that short potential stir, that illustrious bustle each can make but once, when borne to the tomb at man's expense to be borne out of it by and by at God's. Witness this "Country Burial":

Ample make this bed.  
Make this bed with awe;  
In it wait till judgment break  
The excellent and fair.

Be its mattress straight;  
Be its pillow round;  
Let no sunrise's yellow noise  
Interrupt this ground.

Listen to the jubilation of this song over a funeral  
entering the cemetery:

As a train went through a burial gate,  
A bird broke forth and sang,  
And trilled, and quivered, and shook his throat  
Till all the churchyard rang;  
And then adjusted his little notes,  
And bowed and sang again.  
Doubtless he thought meet for him  
To say good-by to men.

She cheers us with the reflection that time will  
still gurgle on, and morn will beam and noon  
will burn, and birds will build as early and bees  
will bustling go, when we as well as she have  
withdrawn from earthly enterprises and are  
gone:

'Tis sweet to know that stocks will stand  
When we with daisies lie,  
That commerce will continue  
And trade as briskly fly.  
It makes the parting tranquil  
And keeps the soul serene,  
That gentlemen as sprightly  
Will conduct the pleasing scene.

Some of her verses anticipate her own death.  
Knowing it must come, she made her soul famil-  
iar with life's extremity:

That at the last it should not be  
A novel agony;  
But she and Death, acquainted,  
Meet tranquilly as friends,  
Salute and pass without a hint,  
And there the matter ends.

When she had definitely read her own death sentence, and reviewed it to see that she made no mistake as to probable date and manner, she wrote:

I have not told my garden yet,  
Lest that should conquer me;  
I have not quite the strength now  
To break it to the bee.

I will not name it in the street,  
For shops would stare that I,  
So shy, so very ignorant,  
Should have the face to die.

The hillsides must not know it,  
Where I have rambled so,  
Nor tell the loving forests  
The day that I shall go,

Nor lisp it at the table,  
Nor heedless by the way  
Hint that within the riddle  
One will walk to-day.

So far as is known, she left few post-mortem requests, but here is one:

If I shouldn't be alive  
When the robins come,  
Give the one in red cravat  
A memorial crumb.

If I couldn't thank you,  
Being just asleep,  
You will know I'm trying  
With my granite lip!

Something almost majestic is in the dignified poise with which this wee woman fronts the most awful sublimities of time and eternity. There is no fear in her. She says she is not afraid and shows it—not of life, since it is that which holds her in one or more existences at Deity's decree; nor of Death, since he is but the porter of her Father's lodge, or the hired man to let down the bars for the tired flocks to come in under the shepherd's care to the securest fold, their wanderings done, their bleatings at an end; nor of resurrection and its crown upon her brow, any more than the east is afraid to have the morning touch its forehead. A marble headstone is only "a Carrara guidepost." Her body is a "little Alban house," with windows shut down so close the spirit cannot see; but she expects to be let out "some gala day." Seeing a hint, a clue, in the chrysalis, and feeling in herself an aptitude for flight which would entitle even a worm presently to wide meadows and easy sweeps of sky, she exclaims:

My cocoon is too tight for me,  
I'm feeling for the air;  
A dim capacity for wings  
Degrades the dress I wear.

The wonder is that with only her tiny feet for grappling irons she should have stayed so long like a captive balloon anchored to this earth. She had spiritual buoyancy enough to float her out of sight. Hear this:

I never hear the word "escape"  
Without a quicker blood,  
A sudden expectation,  
A flying attitude.

I never hear of prisons broad,  
By soldiers battered down,  
But I tug childish at my bars,  
Only to fail again.

Her thought is that the departing soul sets sail  
with exultation, puts to sea "past the houses,  
past the headlands," out to vast eternity; elate  
with "the divine intoxication of the first league  
out from land."

We are unaware that any other poet has written  
so much in detail of death and its accessories.  
She does not tell us of what small personage she  
wrote these lines:

She died—this was the way she died:  
When all her breath was done,  
She took up her simple wardrobe  
And started for the sun.  
Her little figure at the gate  
The angels must have spied,  
Since I could never find her  
Upon this mortal side.

Nor does she tell us whose first death-anniversary  
she marked with these lines:

Went up a year this evening,  
I recollect it well;  
Cheerful as to the village,  
Tranquil as to repose,  
Chastened as to the chapel,  
This humble tourist rose.

Did not talk of returning,  
Alluded to no time  
When, were the gales propitious,  
We might look for him.

Nor does she hint whose dying it is she thus  
describes:

We waited while she passed;  
It was a narrow time;  
Too jostled were our souls to speak;  
At length the notice came.

She mentioned and forgot;  
Then lightly as a reed  
Bent to the water, shivered scarce,  
Consented, and was dead.

And we, we placed the hair,  
And drew the head erect;  
And then an awful leisure was  
Our faith to regulate.

And then comes the hard necessary business of  
the next day:

The bustle in a house  
The morning after death  
Is solemnest of industries  
Enacted upon earth;

The sweeping up the heart,  
And putting love away  
We shall not want to use again  
Until eternity.

Emily Dickinson died in 1886 at the age of fifty-six. The funeral was tenderly conformed to her sensitive tastes. She abhorred a hearse; so her body was carried by human hands all the way to its resting place. It was not a heavy



load. She hated to see a funeral passing along the noisy, inattentive, disrespectful public street; so the casket was not taken on the street, but was carried across lawns from one yard into the next till the cemetery was thus reached. And the slight, light body was laid to rest with "the meek members of the resurrection."

## THE DEIFICATION OF "ONE OF THE ROUGHS": WALT WHITMAN

WALT WHITMAN described himself as "one of the roughs, large, proud, affectionate, eating, drinking, and breeding." And with reference to various established and respectable things, such as accepted canons of literature and civilization's rules of common decency, he was beyond dispute the defiant champion and self-proclaimed leader of roughs and insurgents. How insolently rough and coarse he was in his worst writings almost passes belief. Yet he was fond of proclaiming his own divineness; and if his pretensions fell in any degree short of egotheism, that lack is fully made up by the apotheosis accorded him from the circle of his adorers. We can hardly err in thinking this a phenomenon so abnormal and grotesque as to invite examination.

In acting out the role he had chosen, Whitman posed for his favorite picture with naked throat and in his shirt-sleeves, announced that his mission was to "start an athletic and defiant literature," and wrote stuff so abominably indecent that its appearance in print called for the interference of the police and compelled his dismissal from the service of the United States government. Noble John Milton wrote: "It is of great

concernment in the church and commonwealth to have a vigilant eye how books demean themselves as well as men, and therefore to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors." It was with Milton's sense of public duty toward malefactor literature that the attorney-general of Massachusetts suppressed an edition of Walt Whitman's works, just as, later, the postal authorities of Melbourne refused passage through the Australian mails to some of Zola's books.

With such facts in view it is somewhat startling to read, in Dr. Robert F. Horton's lectures to the Yale Divinity School, that part of the Word of God is in Whitman, and that the works of the author of "Children of Adam" belong to inspired literature. Such an opinion from such a source prompts a question as to where some of our modern guides are trying to lead us. For our own part, if Whitman is affirmed to be one of the seers and prophets through whom up-to-date inspiration is making authoritative new revelations, we take to our heels in alarm and make a breathless run for shelter to the old-fashioned doctrine that the canon of Scripture was closed some time ago, so that "Leaves of Grass" cannot lawfully be added to either the Old Testament or the New; and in that ancient citadel we purpose remaining, at least until all such frightful dangers shall be overpast.

That Whitman was a "rough" in literature, all

the axioms and standards which he shattered declare. He is the apostle of the uncouth and the barbaric, a destructive bovine intruder in the artistic china shop. One of his Georgia admirers says that he "galloped through our literature like an untamed stallion." Defiant of the laws of literary form, he "exhausted the resources of formlessness"; and, as W. D. Howells says: "In formlessness everything spills and wastes away; this is the defect of Walt Whitman, whose way is where artistic madness lies." "Leaves of Grass," in many parts, is the most amorphous agglomeration of unpoetic words ever shoveled together, and much of Whitman's work is really monstrous in form. In a few of his verses there is a swimming majesticalness, as of a walrus sporting, rolling, wallowing in the waves; but for the most part his movement is as ungainly as that same sea-beast flopping, and bumping, and thumping about on the shore. His unwieldy gracelessness suggests the megalosaurus or the iguanodon, and his species may well become extinct like theirs. As for rhythm, his thought was seldom rocked in that cradle of the deep; some of his so-called poetry is described by Professor Barrett Wendell, of Harvard, as "a mad kind of rhythm which sounds as if hexameters were trying to bubble through sewage"; and his verses, mostly, are jangle, not jingle, with about as much meter and music as cow-bells beat out in fly-time.

Whitman's expressed idea of his own rank in literature was that he is a new type, the latest great original; and it would be fine, he said, for the great masters of the past, including Socrates and Plato and others like them, if they could be permitted to come back and study him. He announced himself to the public, and especially to foreign lands, thus: "Self-reliant, with haughty eyes, assuming to himself all the attributes of his country, steps Walt Whitman into literature. . . . An American bard at last!" To these pretensions foreign lands have acquiescently responded with tributes like the following: "He belongs with Diderot, Heine, Ibsen, and Tolstoy"; "the true successor of Shelley"; "brother of Victor Hugo"; "the greatest of American voices"; "one of the world's eternal peaks"; his works are "unparalleled and deathless writings."

But if Whitman is, as he himself declared and as deluded foreigners imagine, the first great representative American poet and the supreme embodiment of the spirit of the Western World, why is not George Francis Train the representative American statesman, and Buffalo Bill with his Wild West Show the representative American artist? If our rapt and passionate American eulogists of Whitman are true patriots, why do they not, for the salvation of American literature, endow in some university a chair of Whitmanese, in order that the future may have the benefit of studying our noblest model? And

since the worship of Whitman has become almost as much a cult and a religion as "Christian Science" is, why should it not help to establish an equipoise among human vagaries by building its church facing Mother Eddy's temple, so that her doctrine that "the body does not exist" may be offset by Whitman's doctrine that "the body is the main concern," with the result that the two antagonistic heresies may nullify each other and produce a beneficent silence? A Whitman church is not so remote a peril as might be supposed, for already an association in Birmingham, England, which calls itself "The Labor Church," perceiving his availability for liturgical purposes, has arranged a form of service in which readings from Walt Whitman alternate with hymns and the Lord's Prayer.

That Whitman is the most audacious of "roughs," in the gross and wanton insult which he offers to our civilized sense of modesty, delicacy, decency, is another marked characteristic of his "defiant literature." To prove in print all that is justly charged against him is impossible, because, as a physician truly says, no magazine or journal would dare to reprint on its pages Whitman's most outrageous lines. But, taking only one of the least offensive of his ingenious vulgarities, when a man deliberately writes and publishes that the aroma of his armpits is finer than prayer, all persons of any reverence or refinement must feel that the squalor

and fetor of a mind capable of such a juxtaposition and rating are subhuman—worthy perhaps of one of Garner's talking gorillas or of vermin-covered Caliban, "sprawling in the pit's much mire," but not of a civilized human being; and we are not surprised that Edmund Gosse should turn away in disgust with the comment, "Something mephitic breathes from this strange personality."

Emerson wrote that Whitman had doubtless ostracized himself from polite (he might have said decent) society by some of his writings. The barbarian is not *persona grata* in civilized circles. What we have in Whitman, according to friendly and apologetic critics, is primitive man dealing with primeval things. That there may be some fitness in calling him the primitive man appears from Kipling's observation, that "primitive man assumes no modesty and is frankly vainglorious, delighting to vaunt himself"; as also from Kunst Hamsun's judgment which classifies Whitman as "a savage, an untutored, untrained Uhland, the last example of a modern man born a savage." That this primitive savage deals with primeval things appears from Edwin Markham's recent statement at the annual meeting of the Walt Whitman Fellowship, that Whitman "brings us back from Wordsworth to the fundamental, primeval things."

In one of his verses Whitman wrote that he prefers animals to men because, he says, they

do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins, and do not make him sick discussing their duty to God. For such reasons he felt like going to live with the beasts. His conscious close affinity to them is no surprise, while the human beings from whom his preference turned away may be pardoned for regretting that he did not early in life follow the drawing of affinity and merge himself with creatures which have no printing-presses and do not write or read indecent verses. He might have been improved by acquiring some of their virtues, for even Professor Dowden, of Trinity College, Dublin, in spite of his British disposition to accept Whitman's self-written credentials as the representative American poet, is compelled by facts to acknowledge his infrabestial indecency, admitting that in some passages Whitman "falls below humanity—falls below even the modesty of brutes."

We cannot help thinking of the glorification of Whitman as a pestiferous fad, a menace to the sanity and purity which have characterized our literature. Marion Crawford complains that the American reading public will tolerate nothing that is not fit for schoolgirls. James Russell Lowell spoke for his country when he wrote that the literature it will approve must be fit, as Louis Stevenson says, *virginibus puerisque*. Our ruling literary sentiment has hitherto consigned to the depths of Tartarus whatever was sacrilegious, debauching, inflammatory. Our



poetry especially has been so cleanly and noble that the insolent offender who fouls it ought to be pilloried and flogged in that condition of nakedness which is so dear to him. Surely if Whitmanolatry continues to spread our literature cannot maintain its high repute for decency.

We are fallen on a day when by many persons impudence, audacity, and hatred of restraint are praised and practiced. One of the most poisonous plagues of our time is a class of men and women writers in prose and verse who say of delicacy, dignity, modesty, and chastity, "Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us." In this offensive class Walt Whitman holds a clear primacy. He for himself glories in his deliberate and defiant coarseness and unblushing animality, as do his idolaters for him. He loudly asserts the right of insurrection against the prescriptions of decency. On things accepted and established he declares war in manifestoes like the following: "I confront peace, security, and all the settled laws to unsettle them; I am more resolute because all have denied me than I could ever have been had all accepted me; I heed not and never have heeded either experience, caution, majorities, or ridicule; and the threat of what is called hell is little or nothing to me; and the lure of what is called heaven is little or nothing to me."

When this "shaggy old man" died an admiring back-country versifier wrote: "A strong,

audacious soul has fled, now Walt is dead." Audacity like Walt's is very taking to those who have his cravings without his courage. Harrison, the actor, wrote in a book which he sent as a present: "To my dear old friend, Walt Whitman, who dared to show his naked soul in heroic utterance of guileless truths." The tragedian well knew that Whitman's most daring nudity was not of the soul; it was the sort of exposure which fanatical policemen interfere with on the streets and Puritanic laws treat as a felony. Emily Dickinson had been well counseled and correctly informed when she wrote to Colonel Higginson, who had mentioned Whitman in one of his letters: "You speak of Mr. Whitman. I never read his book, but was told it is disgraceful."

When the grizzled old man's body was laid away in Harleigh Cemetery, Camden, New Jersey, his English worshipers were grieved, because, as they said, "only one man, and he an atheist by profession, had the courage to speak the funeral oration." But that professional blasphemer had an almost exclusive right to be the spokesman of that hour, for he was the man who pleaded for the disseminators of obscene literature that they should be allowed to use the United States mails for the purpose of inflaming and debauching the youth of the land; and later he lectured to raise money for a monument in New York to Heinrich Heine, to whom a monument has been repeatedly

refused in his fatherland on the ground that "Heine fouled German literature with licentious poems."

The Whitman cult to-day presents an astonishing instance of insanely preposterous pretensions conceded and proclaimed by supposedly sane and intelligent persons. He was the most blatant and bombastic of egotists. Maurice Thompson wrote of him: "No other man ever had such a reservoir of unfiltered and altogether amazing egotism on which to draw for floods of resonant and high-rolling absurdities." Dr. Weir Mitchell writes of Whitman, in that charming and wholesome book, "When All the Woods Are Green": "He was the most entirely vain creature I ever knew. The perfect story of his vanity will never be told. It was past belief." He was afflicted with what Emerson called "the goiter of egotism"; his disease might be diagnosed as egomania complicated with satyriasis. His pretensions were almost unlimited. He talked like a Messiah and Saviour. He summoned men to accept him as a Master, and wrote that his mission was to bestow upon any man or woman the entrance to all the gifts of the universe; that whoever would become his follower would have to give up all else, for he would expect to become for his disciples their sole and exclusive standard—their novitiate would be long and exhausting, the whole past theory of their lives and all conformity to the lives around them

would have to be abandoned. To all who may be unwilling for this severe self-renunciation and all-abandoning consecration to him he says peremptorily: "Release me now; let go your hand from my shoulder, and depart on your way." He wrote of himself thus: "Divine am I, inside and out; if I worship anything, it shall be the spread of my own body—plumb in the up-rights, braced in the beams, stout as a horse, haughty, electrical." Toward all divinities except himself he is scornful, and says that he "takes the dimensions of Jehovah—him and the other gods—for what they are worth, and not a cent more." That sounds like the frenzied Mexican Nagualist shouting: "Lo, I myself am here! I am most furious! I make the loudest noise! I respect no one! What god or demon dares face me?"

Whitman's most recent compeers are Nietzsche, who said of himself before he was sent to the madhouse: "I am the greatest philosopher of the century; more than that, I am a decisive and fateful link between two thousand centuries"; and Dowie, the Zionist, who said: "I am Elijah, the prophet, who first appeared as Elijah himself, second as John the Baptist, and who now comes in me, the restorer of all things. Elijah was a prophet, John was a preacher, but I combine in myself the attributes of prophet, priest, and ruler over men. Gaze on me, then; I say it fearlessly." In all such utterances there is the note of lunacy

or imposture; the amazing thing is that they win believers and followers; and the Whitman worshipers are no whit behind other devotees. Men prominent in literature are telling us that Whitman is "the poet of the Godhead in man"; that parts of his writings must be classed with Job and Isaiah; that his "Leaves of Grass" is a gospel, glad tidings of great joy, worth all the sermons in the country; that he is above all a great religious teacher and prophet who speaks as one having authority and not as the scribes; that his charity is as great as His who said to the thief on the cross, "This day thou shalt be with me in paradise"; that Whitman brings us a new revelation of life, and is in fact the great life-giver of our time, fluid, electric, generative, having the self-reliance of a god; that he means life as much as Christianity means life; that he is the antidote to all the ills of society; that he atones for the sins of us all; and approximate deification culminates in the declaration of one adorer, that "Whitman is the Christ of the nineteenth century." The distinguished author of a volume of effusive and rhapsodical eulogy writes, that "talking about Whitman is like talking about the universe." This seems to have been the conviction of J. A. Symonds also, for he wrote: "Whitman is an immense tree, a kind of Ygdrasil, stretching its roots deep down into the bowels of the world, and unfolding its magic branches through all the spaces of the heavens.

. . . He is the circumambient air, in which float shapes, rise mirage towers and palm groves. He is the globe itself; all seas, lands, forests, climates, storms, snows, sunshines, rains of universal earth. He is all nations, cities, languages, religions, arts, creeds, thoughts, emotions." The writer of that incontinent eulogy seems to have been a pantheist, with Walt Whitman for his all-pervading deity.

An astonishing and unparalleled being was Whitman, if he and his devotees are to be believed. And this essay must be acquitted of exaggeration in characterizing the Whitman cult as "The Deification of 'One of the Roughs.'"

## A GLANCE AT ALFRED NOYES'S POETRY

EDMUND GOSSE and Theodore Watts-Dunton call Alfred Noyes the greatest living English poet.

Five volumes of verse made him, at the age of twenty-six, a topic of the day in England. The fresh touch, the vital feeling, the charming fancy, the aptness of phrase and epithet, and the skill of craftsmanship are found in his poems. But his chief claim upon attention lies in his unusual blending of the gay temper and the serious mood. The heart of the child and the mind of the man are in him, and, as has been said, he blends the sounds which have set the feet of childhood flying in every generation with the deeper undertones of life.

Bliss Carman, criticizing Noyes's poetry, says that it does not show the faults usual in a young poet; it has not that overabsorption in dreams, so common in beginners, and never blurs into vague and misty symbolism; on the contrary, every stanza is perfectly intelligible and carries a clear meaning of its own. In much poetry, for example in that of W. B. Yeats, the poet of the Celtic revival, the reader is borne away by a sense of rapt elation without any definite idea of what he is trying to say. On the other hand, no reader can be in doubt as to Alfred Noyes's

meaning, but neither will you be carried out of yourself by any rapture, any intensity of passion, any abandon of wild beauty.

As a sample of Mr. Noyes's poorest the opening part of "A Night at Saint Helena" may serve. Napoleon on his island of imprisonment is complaining to his physician of the absurdly unnecessary closeness with which he is guarded, and he says that sentinels have been stationed "at quite impossible exits; for you know that I am somewhat bulky nowadays; why, they have even placed a sentinel on every goat-path leading to the sea! This is the kind of dream that harasses one's nerves, and gives one cancer in the stomach." That exact quotation we print here in the form of prose, disversed by us because it does not sound to us like poetry. But even a poem that begins thus woodenly, has in it such a passage as the following, in which Napoleon on Saint Helena, living his life over in a sort of waking dream, recalls the time when, conscious of his supreme mastery over France and believing in his own destiny, he set out to conquer all Europe, saying within himself:

Now let those that cross

My path take heed; for when I come  
The forces of the world are on my side,  
The pitiless powers that feed the sun with fire,  
Direct the wheeling planets and control  
The invincible countermarching of the stars:  
And it shall seem, to those that hear my battle  
Rolling afar the great psalm of my guns,



As if the old energies of time and space,  
 From chaos recreated and reformed  
 To my own order and new purposes,  
 Were passing o'er the borders of this earth,  
 Chanting, like pilgrims on a pilgrimage  
 Through the deep gloom of sorrow and sin and death,  
 The dark funereal progress of the world  
 To the vast triumphs of Eternity;  
 A chant that sounds as if the seas of doom  
 Were slowly breaking on an iron shore  
 Remote and inappellable as God.

A poem on "The Passing of Summer" sings of the fading of the season's glories, the passing away of summer's splendors through the gorgeous gates of autumn, when the lilies lie rotting in the rain and the leaves fall to enrich the mold, and the woods have forgotten the songs of the birds: and it ends with man's superiority to Nature, and declares that the spirit of man may confidently claim to have a loftier vision and a nobler aim than e'er was born to die; since only he, among earthly creatures, can mark and note with lit eyes and intelligence from his high point of view, as if throned on eternity, the passing of earth's great golden pageantry away into the dark; and he can read the lesson of it all.

Were we asked to select the most original, delightful, and "catching" poem in this book, it is not impossible that we might name "The Barrel-Organ." The hand-organ caroling near sunset along a city street plays its own part in the symphony of human life that runs through day and night. Rolling out its succession of

tunes, it reflects the variations of man's life. The music changes and ranges from joy to pain, from grave to gay through all the human carnival of hopes and fears, of passions and regrets. Now it's marching onward through the realms of old romance, now trolling out some fond, familiar tune; and now it's roaring cannon down to fight the king of France, and now it's prattling softly to the moon. Now *La Traviata* sighs its sad song, and now *Il Trovatore* cries its tale of wrong, and now bold knights to battle go with sword and shield and lance. And all around the organ there upon the city street, there's the sea of human joys and pains and wonders and regrets—a sea without a shore. The music goes pulsing out over the human stream on the Piccadilly pavement, and a thousand feet unconsciously mark time; it casts a spell on human hearts, sets memories astir, and jostles all the thoughts of passers-by. There's a thief that listens with a cold and evil face, a portly and prosperous man of business, a poor clerk, a burly butcher, a modish, bland-faced woman, with little jeweled hands; and the music does something to them all. There's an Oxford man that listens, and the music sends him back to the green banks of the Isis, and the boat race on the river, and the barge, the eight, the minute gun, the counting, the long disheveled rout, the howl along the towpath while the race is still in doubt, and the long yell when the victory is won. There's a laborer that

listens to the organ on the street, and it brings to him the voice of his dear dead, and he looks into the sunset summer sky and seems to see the bride whom early April took away; his lonely soul can hear her softly singing. There's a bleared and haggard harlot, and the organ music ringing in her ears somehow brings her to her senses and makes her feel the bitterness of all the shameful years, the misery of a life that blights and sears, till her soul is sick within her and her eyes are brimmed with tears, remembering her lost innocence and sorrowing for her sins. Across all this, as the hand-organ man, that troubadour of city streets, grinds out the music that stirs Piccadilly, the poem brings a merry lilting song which sings the lure of Kew Gardens to the dwellers in London:

Go down to Kew in lilac-time, in lilac-time, in lilac-time;  
 Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)  
 And you shall wander hand in hand with love in summer's  
     wonderland;  
 Go down to Kew in lilac-time (it isn't far from London!)

The cherry trees are seas of bloom and soft perfume and  
     sweet perfume;  
 The cherry trees are seas of bloom (and oh, so near to  
     London!)  
 And there they say, when dawn is high and all the world's  
     a blaze of sky  
 The cuckoo, though he's very shy, will sing a song for  
     London.

The nightingale is rather rare and yet they say you'll hear  
     him there  
 At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!)

The linnet and the throstle, too, and after dark the long halloo

And solemn-eyed *tu-whit, to-whoo* of owls that ogle London.

For Noah hardly knew a bird of any kind that isn't heard  
At Kew, at Kew in lilac-time (and oh, so near to London!)  
And when the rose begins to pout and all the chestnut-  
splees are out

You'll hear them all without a doubt, all chorusing for  
London.

Illustrative of a far different mood and in another octave of this poet's range are the verses, "Statesmen." The statesman's business is not to seek the undiscovered and sublime, the spectacular and the sensational, the crowd-pleasing and the popular—not to spread the white sails of the Ship of State in boisterous winds; but to bring the good ship safe home across the seas of Time to the haven of prosperity and peace. Here are the statesman's largeness of view, the firmness of his hand upon the helm, his long patience, and his faithfulness:

His hands upon the wheel deny  
The wild demands of circumstance;  
His eyes are on the distant sky  
Beyond the clouds of chance:

And when, still beating up the wind,  
He slowly brings the Ship of State  
Home, though the people chafe to find  
How dark it is and late;

With all his tacking courses run  
At last beyond the roaring sea,  
Men find him faithful to the one  
Haven where they would be.

Of still another sort are the verses entitled "The Old Skeptic"—whose soliloquy the poem purports to be. He is weary of disbelieving. In the sophomoric pride of his youth he pierced his father's heart with words of blatant unbelief, and his father's mute eyes looked on him with grief and amazement. He has read the unsettling, confusing, darkening books that men of his own sort write. But they have brought him no peace, given him nothing to take the place of his father's simple faith, and now, empty and ill at ease, he comes toward the end of life. And the old skeptic says, "I am weary of disbelieving." Hear him:

I will go back to my home and look at the wayside flowers,  
 And hear from the wayside cabins the sweet old hymns  
 again,  
 Where Christ holds out his arms in the quiet evening  
 hours,  
 And the light of the chapel windows broods on the peace-  
 ful lane.

And there I shall hear men praying the deep old simple  
 prayers,  
 And there I shall see, once more, the fond old faith  
 confessed,  
 And the strange old light on their faces who hear as a  
 blind man hears—  
*Come unto me, ye weary, and I will give you rest.*

I will go back and believe in the deep, divine old tales,  
 And pray the sweet old prayers that I learned at my  
 mother's knee,  
 Where the Sabbath tolls its peace thro' the breathless  
 mountain vales,  
 And the sunset's sacred hymn hallows the listening sea.

One poem wonders whether we may not, even in heaven, yearn to see again the beauty of May-time; whether we may not long to come back from high and wide communion with the universe and God to some lane we used to tread, hemmed in with hawthorn hedges, sweet with blossoms and alive with singing birds. And yet it thinks the sight of the little towns and twisted streets would seem strange to us, and all the hurrying works and ways of men would seem like children's games. It would seem strange to see the little homes of men, with their low roofs keeping the deep eternal night aloof and furnishing a refuge from the sky—homes into which men enter, close their cottage door and forget the stars. How would it seem to souls, if they came back from the æonian ebb and flow of great eternity, to hear the old clock ticking off the moments on the stairs; if from the vast antiphonies of life beyond the grave we should come back to our old books, the evening lamp upon the center table, those pictures on the wall? "De Profundis" is a poem of seven verses, each of which ends with the prayer, "Like as a father pitieth his children, pity Thou me!" One poem is a poet's answer to the question, "Do ye believe?" The gist of his answer is that it is Christ that men really believe rather than any list of doctrines. He has not digested and decided upon the Westminster Confession, nor the Thirty-nine Articles:

But we have stood beside our dead,  
 And, in that hour of need,  
 One tear the Man of Sorrows shed  
 Was more than any creed.

Little Ptolemaic thinkers spend their time debating if Joshua stayed a sun that rolls around a central earth; but while they talk, the only thing men hear is that great cry, *Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabacthani*, go up once more, while overhead the heavens are like a scroll on which this writing flames, "This is the King of all the world upon His Cross of Love." Darkly, as in a glass, our sight gropes; we cannot see face to face as angels do in the clear celestial light. But we have the witness of men who saw Him and martyrs who died for Him, and we know Him who died and lives—the King of kings. The poet says:

*Do you believe?* On every side  
 Great hints of Him go by.  
*Do you believe?* The straws that dance  
 Far down the dusty road  
 Mean little to the careless glance  
 By careless eyes bestowed,  
 Till full into your face the wind  
 Smites, and the laugh is dumb;  
 And from the rending heavens behind,  
 Christ answers—*Lo, I come!*

Alfred Noyes has a something of his own—a native, uncopied original which justifies his singing, and entitles him to perch on a leafy branch in the woods of literature, and which gives the reading world a reason for pausing to listen.

## A CRITIC'S ESTIMATE OF PARSIFAL

A MAGAZINE writer once spoke of James Huneker as a critic of interesting things in general and of music and the drama in particular, and said that, while this critic would not restrain himself if he wished to talk of literature or painting or the glyptic art, his special predilection and aptitude is for passing sane judgment on the musical enthusiasms of our time. It is questioned if any man since Ruskin has been more luminous and independent in his utterances; and it is said that a critical literature which includes the work of his curious, keen, and subtle brain cannot be regarded as savorless.

Our present writing is for the sake of sampling Mr. Huneker's critical style and also in order to dispel the notion, by which some religious people have been obsessed, that the opera called Parsifal is, if not as entirely religious as an oratorio, yet in some esoteric sense and for æsthetic souls a religious message, a real evangel. One of these æsthetic enthusiasts was Rev. H. R. Haweis, of London, who made a journey to Bayreuth years ago to attend a performance of Parsifal, and afterward wrote in his book, "My Musical Memories," a description of it full of robins and doves and rose leaves, telling how he was thrilled



by the fierce bursts of passion, the wild shocks of uncontrolled misery, mingled with the carnal joy-music of Klingsor's magic garden.

Mr. Huneker's exposure and denunciation of the nature of this opera may amaze and grieve those clergymen who defended it as a pious drama, urged church members to witness it, and in some instances had an abbreviated form of it rendered in their churches. They will be surprised, pained, and possibly instructed by his characterizing of Parsifal as "the most morbid, most nonsensical, most immoral, and most blasphemous of operas, from witnessing which the spectator, drugged by the music, confused by the bells, and intoxicated by feasts of color, staggers away, having attended a display of the art of debauch in color, tone, and gesture"; and they will be shocked at hearing the critic add the more general charge that Wagner is responsible for having, by his example and influence, filled modern music with sensuality. Huneker says that those who go to see Parsifal see a tedious and carnal opera; they see a lot of women-hating men deceiving themselves with spears and with drugs and with old goblets and with all manner of juggling formulas, and yet being waited on by a woman—a poor miserable witch; they see a silly youth blasphemously meant in a mystical way to represent Jesus, and being absurdly treated as if he had murdered a human being merely because he shot a swan; they see this same dead

bird borne away on a litter of twigs, to noble, impressive music like a feathered Siegfried; they see a maniacal king raving over an impossible wound and performing ceremonies which recall the Roman Catholic communion service. It is the height of absurdity, and Mr. Huneker wonders how people with any common sense can sit enthralled before the nonsensical nebulosity of Parsifal with its manufactured mysticism and misty allusions.

The principal characters in the play are Parsifal and Kundry; the one is an effeminate lad, a callow boy, who, when he is not a simulacrum of Christ, in white baptismal robes, is a particularly silly youth, who never becomes a normal young man; and the other, Mr. Huneker tells us, is the most depraved woman in all art, a ridiculous hag, an Astarte, an Herodias, and a Magdalen, all in one: Wagner himself calls her the Rose of Hell, the She Devil. It was before such a play as this that audiences, containing many professedly Christian people, sat and absurdly maintained an attitude of churchlike awe and reverence, as if the sacrament were being administered or some other sacred ceremony were going on.

One newspaper's name for this craze was "Parsifalitis, or Purefoolomania." Wagner had purposed perpetrating something even more sacrilegious than this play. In 1849 he revealed to a friend that he was planning a musical drama with

Jesus Christ as the chief character, and with a scheme too base and horrible to be repeated here. He was advised and forced to abandon his foully blasphemous plan. But he did not wholly relinquish his purpose; and Parsifal is a moderated and veiled version of his original idea—as near it as he dared to venture in any Christian land.

Concerning the libretto of this nonsensical opera, which has masqueraded as a sacred music-drama, the following is part of what Mr. Huneker said:

It is a farrago of odds and ends, a very dust-bin of philosophies and beliefs, vegetarian, anti-vivisection, and other fads; an unfolding nightmare of character and events, without simplicity, lucidity, or naturalness; a drama which astounds by its puerility and vapidness, its senseless interweaving of shreds and patches from Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Schopenhauerism. . . . The entire work is such a jumble of creeds that future Bauers, Har-nacks, Delitzsches, and other ethical archæologists will have a terrible task if this work is exhumed ages hence and taken for a relic of some tribal form of worship among the barbarians of the then remote nineteenth century. Here in America, the Land of the Almighty Hysteria, this artificial medley of faded music and grotesque forms is sufficient to set tripping the feet of them that go forth upon the mountains in search of new half-baked religions. . . . Nowhere but in Wagner and by Wagnerites would this wish-wash of gospel narrative, mediæval romance, and Teutonic philosophy be tolerated. Yet his disciples sit through it all as if listening to a new evangel of art, philosophy, and religion. In America, where new religions sprout daily as do potatoes in a dark cellar, slighter causes have led to the foundation of a new religion—witness the rise and growth of Mormonism. But the weak spot in Parsifal is its lack of absolute sincerity—the truthful note

is absent. With all its conjuring of churchly motives Parsifal falls short of the one thing, faith—a faith you may find in any roadside Bavarian cabin. It is weakest in the Faith motive, and in consequence suffers ethically from the same sterility. All the scholarly and clerical efforts to make the work an ethical or philosophical message are futile.

It may be added, though of less importance and in the nature of anticlimax, that Mr. Huneke rated Parsifal as inferior in power to Wagner's other works. It was the product of old age, his final offering to the world, the work of a man who had outlived his highest power; it lacks the virile glow and imaginative force, the bold, robust, clean-cut vigor of his earlier music. The old man had reached the end of his ammunition, and many blank cartridges are fired in Parsifal. "It is a cunning spectacle devised by a man of genius in the twilight of his powers; it is Wagner's own *Götterdämmerung*, the sunset music of his singular and powerful career." Would that it had been worthier.

## FRANCIS THOMPSON ON SHELLEY

AN exquisite bit of literature is Francis Thompson's essay on Shelley, and so seldom does anything appear that is real literature and really exquisite, that, when it does, all who love such products should be notified.

Back in the eighties of the nineteenth century Bishop Vaughan met the poet Francis Thompson in London and suggested that he contribute an article to the *Dublin Review*. Thus prompted, Thompson in 1889 offered this essay on Shelley. The editor declined the article, and the discouraged author threw it aside, and it was found among his papers after his death. His literary executor offered it again to the venerable quarterly which had declined it nineteen years before, and it was published in the *Dublin Review* in July, 1908, with the result that for the first time in its seventy-two years the *Dublin* had to issue a second edition to supply the demand which clamored for copies of this masterpiece of English prose, this nest of buried jewels, posthumously brought to view and glittering in the sunlight of publicity. One capable critic notified the public with words like these: "Brilliant, joyous, poignant are these pages of interpretation, as sensitive and magical as the mind of one poet ever lent to the genius of another." It set Lon-

don ringing, as would some splendid music never played till found in the portfolio of some dead composer. Thus the rejected article, which was the brilliant expression of the inward glory of Francis Thompson's youth, becomes his own rich eulogy and epitaph. The pity of the matter is that public appreciation arrives too late to comfort him. Unsuccess, poverty, and hardship made his life bitter and sorrowful, a hapless lot, full of sheer misery; and the medal of honor pinned now on his dead breast accents and intensifies the pathos of his fate.

In the introduction prefixed to this essay, Mr. George Wyndham calls it "the most important contribution to pure letters written in English during the last twenty years. . . . Matthew Arnold's 'Essays in Criticism' did not reach such heights. They do not, as a rule, handle subjects so pertinent to poetry; and when they do they are outclassed by this essay. . . . The only recent essay on poetry which challenges comparison with Francis Thompson's Shelley is Myers's Virgil. Thompson's style is incomparable in rhythm and profuse illustration. He is rich and melodic, where Myers is sweet and ornate. Thompson's article, though in the form of prose, is pure poetry, and is also in reality, though unconsciously, a human document of intense suffering. This is why it pierces like an arrow to the universal heart of man, and sticks and quivers there."

One of Francis Thompson's affirmations is that Shelley was essentially an eternal child, the enchanted child. Listen to this: "In Shelley's poetry we see the winsome face of the child. Perhaps none of his poems is more purely and typically Shelleian than 'The Cloud,' and it is interesting to note how essentially it springs from the faculty of make-believe. The same thing is conspicuous throughout all his singing; it is the child's faculty of make-believe raised to the *n*th power. He is ever at play. The universe is his box of toys. He dabbles his fingers in the day-fall. He is gold-dusty with tumbling amidst the stars. He makes bright mischief with the moon. The meteors nuzzle their noses in his hand. He teases into growling the kenneled thunder, and laughs at the shaking of its fiery chain. He dances in and out of the gates of heaven; its floor is littered with his broken fancies. He runs wild over the fields of ether. He chases the rolling world. He gets between the feet of the horses of the sun. He stands in the lap of patient Nature, and twines her loosened tresses after a hundred willful fashions, to see how she will look nicest in his song." What a picture of an eternal child romping with the universe!

Farther on the essay returns to this point as follows: "The poems on which the lover of Shelley leans most lovingly, and which best represent Shelley to him, are some of the shorter poems and detached lyrics, in which Shelley forgets

that he is anything but a poet, forgets sometimes that he is anything but a child, lies back in his skiff, and looks at the clouds. He plays truant from earth, slips through the wicket of fancy into heaven's meadow, and goes gathering stars. Here we have that absolute virgin-gold of song which is the scarcest among human products, and for which we can go to but three poets—Coleridge in 'Christabel' and 'Kubla-Khan'; Shelley in 'The Skylark,' 'The Cloud,' and 'The Sensitive Plant'; and Keats in 'The Eve of Saint Agnes' and 'The Nightingale.' These are made of quintessential loveliness, the very attar of poetry." And again, near its end, the essay reverts to the same view of Shelley: "Enchanted child, born into a world unchildlike; spoiled darling of Nature, playmate of her elemental daughters; 'pard-like spirit, beautiful and swift,' laired amidst the burning fastnesses of his own fervid mind; bold foot along the verges of precipitous dreams; light leaper from crag to crag of inaccessible fancies; towering Genius, whose soul rose like a ladder between earth and heaven with the angels of song ascending and descending upon it!"

That Shelley never ceased to be a magnified child is reiterated. To the last he retained the idiosyncrasy of childhood expanded and matured without differentiation. In his life, as in his poetry, he shows the genuine child's power of investing little things with imaginative interest. And even the errors of his life are palliated by



Francis Thompson as being due to the irrationalities and unrestrained impulses of a foolish child. And it was no enmity of circumstances, but his own unreasonable and ungoverned nature that was responsible for Shelley's mistakes and unhappiness. Thompson calls "Prometheus Unbound" the greatest and most prodigal exhibition of Shelley's powers—an "amazing lyric world where immortal clarities sigh past in the perfumes of the blossoms, populate the breathings of the breeze, throng and twinkle in the leaves that twirl upon the bough; where the very grass is all a-rustle with lovely spirit-things, and a weeping mist of music fills the air. The final scenes especially are such a Bacchic reel and rout and revelry of beauty as leaves one staggered and giddy; poetry is spilt like wine and music runs to waste. The choruses sweep down the wind, tirelessly, flight after flight, till the breathless soul almost cries for respite from the unrolling splendors."

It is interesting to find Francis Thompson saying that the one thing which prevents Shelley's "Adonais" from being perfect is its lack of Christian hope. Thompson can take no comfort in the prospect of a mere pantheistic immortality, "whose wan countenance," he says, "is as the countenance of a despair." A poor immortality, indeed, it is that thrusts you into the maw of Nature and circulates your dissolved elements through her veins. Thompson's essay does not

ignore the evil side of Shelley's life, but thinks that through it all there was a blind and stumbling effort toward higher things. He is not considered genuinely corrupt of heart, as was Byron, "through the cracks and fissures of whose heaving versification steam up perpetually the sulphurous vapors from his central iniquity." It is not believed that any Christian ever had his faith shaken through reading Shelley, unless his faith were shaken before he read Shelley. Thompson argues that no one really corrupt and carnal could write poetry so consistently ethereal as Shelley's. He says, "we should believe in nothing if we believed that, for it would be the consecration of a lie. The devil can do many things. But the devil cannot write poetry. He may mar a poet, but he cannot make a poet. Among all the temptations wherewith he tempted Saint Anthony, though we have often seen it stated that he howled, we have never seen it stated that he sang."

Shelley's heresies were borrowed, it is claimed, from the French Revolution in a wild and frenzied period; and it is said that the religion around him was a spectral Christianity, unable to permeate and regulate human society. The radical defect which mildews our contemporary poetry in general, according to Francis Thompson, is the predominance of art over inspiration, of body over soul. Writers, even those of high aim, are overdeliberate in expression. This results in

choosing the most ornate word, the word farthest from ordinary speech. In prose, Henry James is an example of this. It affects even writers who aim at simplicity, for "nothing is so artificial as our simplicity. We are self-conscious to the finger-tips; and this entails loss of spontaneity and insures that whatever poets may be born, the spirit of Shelley is not likely to find a reincarnation among us. An age that is ceasing to produce childlike children cannot produce a Shelley."

Touching on the familiar but sometimes overlooked fact that feeling inevitably fluctuates, the essay before us says: "Even love seems to have its tidal moments, lapses and flows. Love is an affection, its display is an emotion; love is the air, its display is the wind. An affection may be constant; an emotion can no more be constant than the wind can constantly blow." Referring to Robert Browning's wooing of Elizabeth Barrett, Francis Thompson mints this image: "Browning stooped and picked up a fair-coined soul that lay rusting in a pool of tears."

In closing our consideration of this brilliant essay, a literary masterpiece barely redeemed from oblivion, we must say that we are less convinced by Francis Thompson's insistence that Shelley belongs to the metaphysical school than by his characterizing of Shelley as a child. The latter view we can accept as largely true; but an essential child is not metaphysical.

## LANIER'S DEVOUT BALLAD

"A BALLAD OF TREES AND THE MASTER," by Sidney Lanier, is so artless, simple, sacred, sweet, as to stand almost alone in a niche by itself in devotional literature. It is the reverent and tender soliloquy of a Christian disciple who, loving nature and worshiping nature's God, goes into the woods and presently comes out again, devoutly meditating all the while in a way which makes his going in and coming out a sort of sacramental obedience to Him who dignified an ordinary action by saying of it to his disciples, "This do in remembrance of me."

The poet is musing about his Lord, and as he approaches the woods, looking toward them, he reflects:

Into the woods my Master went,  
Clean forspent, forspent.

Having entered the woods, he thinks still how the weary Christ did the same:

Into the woods my Master came,  
Forspent with love and shame.

Feeling sure that Nature must have known and acknowledged her Lord, he says to himself:

But the olives they were not blind to him,  
The little gray leaves were kind to him,  
The thorn tree had a mind to him,  
When into the woods he came.

When ready to leave the woods, and looking out toward their margin, the poet, still reverently meditating, sees in imagination his submissive Lord leaving the shadow of Gethsemane's olive trees:

Out of the woods my Master went,  
And he was well content.

Emerging into the open, Lanier's loving and pitying thoughts go pacing on, side by side with the Man of Sorrows:

Out of the woods my Master came,  
Content with death and shame.

Then the spirit of this tree-loving Christian sees in a vision the betrayer and the soldiers lead his Master out and away from the Garden of the Anguish:

When death and shame would woo him last,  
From under the trees they drew him last.

And finally, as the musing poet moves homeward from the woods, the crucifixion comes in sight—Calvary, where the Saviour's murderers stain the wood of a tree with his blood:

'Twas on a tree they slew him last,  
When out of the woods he came.

That is all of the ballad, and the poet's short retreat with "Trees and the Master" ends in a silence which seems to shake as with sobs suppressed. That is all, only sixteen short lines; but no great paintings of our Lord's passion have moved us more than Lanier's two simple

and pathetic verses. Though not so impulsive or effusive, they seem to us as truly devotional as anything in Thomas à Kempis or Madame Guyon, with the advantage of an unconventional and very sane religiousness which is of the open air and not of the cloister. We think them quite as worthy to be cherished perpetually for their unique reality, their unaffected simplicity, their brief completeness, as Letitia Barbauld's much-praised verse addressed to life, the authorship of which Wordsworth said he envied her:

Life! we've been long together,  
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather;  
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear,  
Perhaps 'twill cost a sigh, a tear;  
Then steal away, give little warning,  
Choose thine own time;  
Say not "Good night," but in some brighter clime  
Bid me "Good morning."

## RELIGION





## A WORD FROM WILLIAM ARTHUR

SOME years ago, at the fall opening of Drew Theological Seminary, Dr. William Arthur, of England, author of that incandescent classic, "The Tongue of Fire," made a fervent, lucent, persuasive, and memorable speech. The entire address was a copious and limpid stream of wisdom undefiled. Its most impressive admonition was the following, reproduced not precisely in his words, but in substance: "Sometimes a progressive student or learned professor has allowed himself to be swept away by views and arguments which loosened him from long-established truths; and if the scholar or teacher who thus swerved from the faith could have returned to earth not many years after death, he would have found that the formidable man or the irresistible book which had torn him from his old anchorage was speedily forgotten, no ripple remaining on the surface of human thought nor wave-mark on the shore to show that such a man or book had ever been."

The sudden disappearance of novel theories has sometimes happened within the lifetime of their misguided victims. We have known men who forsook their old faith and embarked on a theory which quickly became a derelict, a deserted and water-logged hulk afloat without

officers or crew on the high seas of thought. When the ill-constructed and rotten theory proved unseaworthy and had to be abandoned, some of those unhappy passengers have had a long row to shore, some have longed in vain for the old faith to come within their horizon and pick them up, and some have gone mad with the hunger and thirst of unbelief and leaped overboard into the bitter and icy ocean of despair.

At the time when William Arthur was speaking to the young ministers at Drew, Mrs. Humphry Ward's "Robert Elsmere" was the sensation of the hour. That disturbing book, like others of its spirit and class, was ephemeral. The imaginary character whose name it bore was a fair sample of the faint-hearted, pusillanimous, and inexcusable simpleton who gives up his faith without one decent reason for so doing and almost without a struggle. Whether that particular book numbered any victims to its unbelief we are uninformed; but at all events it is already well-nigh forgotten, and only adds one more to the long list of ineffectual attacks on the Christian faith. Not to speak of the assaults made in early centuries, though they were more fierce and violent than any in our day, it is easy to recall many bold theories which in modern times have seemed confident and formidable for a while but have failed and faded away. Christianity, looking out of its windows, has seen a procession of would-be overthrowers and de-

stroyers passing by with menacing gestures at its turrets and foundations, but impotent and ineffectual like the duke in Browning's "The Statue and the Bust," passing and repassing through the years, "Empty and fine as a swordless sheath."

We recall how Hume, the mightiest of modern infidels, whose skeptical writings were for their purpose the perfection of literary art, carried away by his influence many cultivated men and despoiled them of their faith. But critical analysis of his reasonings afterward made it plain that his argument against the credibility of miracles would not bear examination. In course of time Huxley came and remarked—even he—"Whoso clearly appreciates all that is implied in the falling of a stone can have no difficulty about any doctrine simply on account of its marvelousness." And even such a skeptic as Goldwin Smith feels compelled to say: "Assuming the existence of a God and his care for man as his work, which Hume does not openly deny, there is no presumption against his revelation of himself in the only conceivable way, which is by an interruption of the general course of things; there is, rather, a presumption that he would so reveal himself." And so those who, at the supposed bidding of reason, went over at any time to Hume's unbelief, were found to have surrendered a rational and valid faith to unreasonable and invalid reasonings, and with opened eyes and

clarified vision could see in the distance Reason and Wisdom standing with the Faith they themselves had irrationally and unwisely abandoned.

We recall Lessing, who made a startling sensation in his day—a brilliant, cynical, and daring mind, but no sound philosopher; rather, a guerrilla chieftain making dashing raids upon the seats of philosophy and religion, especially upon historic Christianity, with evident exhilaration over the consternation caused in some quarters by his performances. Dividing his time between destructive criticism and the gaming table, he was a gambler as well as an intellectual guerrilla, with the double recklessness of both. Half a century later Strauss applied Lessing's methods to the four Gospels and the life of Christ. Next in this most unapostolic succession came Baur and the Tübingen school. Their successors are the rash and reckless destructionists of to-day in Germany and England. But from Lessing to Cheyne their methods are discredited, and their wild conclusions denied in all the seats of sane and sober and sound scholarship. Harnack writes: "Sixty years ago David Friedrich Strauss thought he had almost entirely destroyed the historic credibility not only of the fourth but also of the first three Gospels as well. The historical criticism of two generations has succeeded in restoring that credibility." Strauss's "Life of Jesus," which attempted to explain the Gospels on the mythical theory,

claiming the miracles and other incidents in the career of Christ to be purely mythical and imaginary, shook the faith of some; but Strauss himself in the second edition of his "Life of Jesus" receded from his own theory, at least in part. And all the years since then have been filled with the increasingly sure demonstration of the historicity of the Jesus of the Gospels and with assured verification of the Scripture accounts of his life, under the application of the severest critical tests known to the most searching modern scholarship.

Renan's "Life of Jesus," with the bewitching beauty of its literary style, its poetic atmosphere, and fascinating romantic coloring, produced in some circles of European thought, a prodigious sensation. Its bold speculations secured a wide reading. But as soon as capable critical examination got to work upon the book it became quickly manifest that with all its show of erudition, it lacked critical basis, being built more upon imagination than upon history. The brilliant but superficial Frenchman treated one Scripture incident as historical and another as mythical by arbitrary whim and without any assigned reason; the miracle of the raising of Lazarus, for example, being regarded as in a sense historical, while other recorded miracles are assumed without any given reason to be totally unhistorical. Such picking and choosing among recorded miracles is, to say the least,

rather hazardous business for anybody. He who gives up all other miracles cannot hold on to the miracle of resurrection, whether it be of Lazarus or of Jesus.

Another book marked, like Renan's, by boldness of theory and display of erudition, was Buckle's "History of Civilization." It had no charm of style and was the work of a prodigious plodder piling up statistics and sorting them to support his theories. Buckle's thesis was that all human progress, even the moral and supposedly spiritual advancement, is traceable to physical or, at least, human influences, and can be so accounted for. He held that there are no supernatural and unreckonable factors at work in the development of humanity, but that the factors can all be scientifically ascertained and measured and the course of human history calculated and predicted as surely as expected duration of life is figured out by life insurance companies from a study of vital statistics—almost as precisely as the orbit of a star is mapped out by an astronomer. The teaching of Buckle, as of Gumplowicz and Bourdeau, was that the actions of men are impelled by forces which they cannot resist, and that the tide which brings on events is uncontrollable and inevitable. No place is allowed to the will of man or to the immeasurable power of personality. For example, Bourdeau said that if Napoleon had been shot at Toulon, then Hoche, or Kleber, or some-

body else would have done—would have had to do—precisely what Napoleon did; which is like saying that if Napoleon had not existed, somebody else would have had to be Napoleon and play his part. But actors who were able to play the part of Napoleon were not plentiful. There was only one in fact—Napoleon himself. If he had not been there, neither his deeds nor any like them would have been done. Human progress is not mechanical or automatic. The incalculable power of personality, both human and divine, must be reckoned as a mighty and moving factor.

Buckle's book, with its accumulation of alleged facts in huge heaps and its pompous marshaling of figures, forty years ago disturbed the faith of some. Mature members of the senior class in college were overwhelmed by it. His display of knowledge exceeded in bulk all that the seniors had extracted from the faculty in all the recitation rooms. Seniors so grave and reverend of aspect that freshmen stood in awe of them, could not answer Buckle with all their vast acquisitions of learning, and they had passed up on everything except the final "exams." Many quite mature undergraduates were disturbed and dismayed, and some lightly concluded that the Spiritual was done for.

But it did not take the world long to perceive that in his prodigiously laborious task Buckle was only bolstering up a pet theory and trying

to fortify and justify his chosen philosophical scheme by piling up the facts of history around it. His big book was merely a piece of special pleading on behalf of a theory which had little or nothing to stand on. John Fiske, when but a college boy, was quick to see through Buckle's fallacies and struck them down on sight, as Borden P. Bowne, when just out of college, exposed, as thoroughly as it has ever been done, the fallacies of Herbert Spencer's philosophy. Buckle's "History of Civilization" was justly characterized by Charles Francis Adams as "crude, impulsive, hasty in generalization, and paradoxical in judgment." Justin McCarthy says it "was a monument of courage, energy, and labor, but is now a heap of ruins." When Dr. Crozier mentioned Buckle to Carlyle, the gruff old Scotchman growled: "Of all the blockheads by whom this bewildered generation has been deluded, that man Buckle was the worst. A more longwinded, conceited blockhead, or one more full of empty formulas about the progress of the species, progress of this and progress of that, especially the progress of science, I have never come across. A poor creature he was that could be of service to no mortal." It is not inexact or unfair to say that Carlyle's opinion is now generally held concerning Buckle's theories. His attempt to unspiritualize history failed. His scientific hypothesis in explanation of the course of human affairs has been completely discredited.



On Buckle's tombstone appeared these words taken from the Arabic: "The written word remains long after the writer: when he is resting under the earth his works endure." Not of his writings is that inscription true. His writings have already passed into oblivion; men cannot be hired to read them; only his name remains—the name of one who tried to eliminate the supernatural Presence and the spiritual meaning out of history and to deny the reality and power of personality, both human and divine.

All mature scholars know that many disturbing and disrupting theories once voluble and self-important are now so remote and unrelated to the modern mind that even when restated they no longer transmit either sense or sound, but are like Markham's great picture of Semiramis rocking on an ancient road of hell, of whom he says that "when her voice was dead, her weary lips beat on without a sound." Joseph Parker, the shaggy lion who made the City Temple famous, once said in his pulpit: "In the past thirty-three years I have seen enough dead theories, exploded nightmares, and discarded hypotheses to fill a full-sized cemetery. They have gone the way of all the earth—dust to dust. They flamboyantly entered the world like an amateur military band, with much noise and swagger, and coughed their way out of it like a squad of consumptive tramps. Whenever a

preacher is parading a new and sparkling theory in religion, I know the first nail in his coffin has been driven and clinched. The one thing that is forever new and fresh is the old Christian Evangel, which is in fact from everlasting to everlasting."

## A ROMANTIC CHRIST

"WHAT think ye of Christ?" is a question which it is proper to put to all men; and it is lawful to require of everyone an answer. To that question every human being with any intellectual self-respect or sense of obligation is bound to make in reason, in honor, and in decency some respectful reply. It is a test question and will search the quality and bent of every mind that entertains it. In every case the man's reply to it will reveal his own nature. No one can answer it honestly without making an exposé of his inmost self, his appetencies, his affiliations, his class and rank in the scale of being. Nothing is more true than that Jesus is set for judgment in the earth. Whoever judges him, at the same time passes judgment on himself. Whoever sights him, even from afar, straightway reveals his own affinities or aversions according as he seeks and draws near to, or shuns and shies off from, Christ. The procession of men coming up before Christ instinctively parts itself into two columns, one going to his right hand with saints and angels, and the other to his left hand with goats and demons.

Until within a few years it might have been a problem for curious speculation, what a thoroughbred and utter æsthete would probably

think of Christ. This is no longer left to speculation. In a volume entitled "De Profundis" such an one has told the world how Christ affects him and what estimate he puts upon Jesus of Nazareth. So that now all who wish may have a chance to see Jesus through an æsthete's eyes. For all normal human beings this very peculiar way of looking at Christ will be a novel and in the end unpleasing experience. It is the view of an exquisite voluptuary and pagan who seems devoid of moral perception, having not much more sense of the fierce difference between right and wrong than a faun or a satyr is supposed to have. Or, if whatever moral faculty he may have been born with has not been wholly extirpated, at least it is fair to say that his moral vision is so dimmed and perverted, so cataracted and strabismused, that he sees all things through a haze with everything out of drawing and distorted. To ethical distinctions he seems so color-blind that sin and holiness appear to him of one and the same color. So abnormal is he that he might easily play the part of a moral freak in a dime museum. But neither this abnormality, nor the fact that his study of Christ was made for the most part while he was a convict at hard labor in prison, disqualifies him from pronouncing upon Jesus Christ the critical judgment of a past master in æstheticism. In the realm of æsthetics he is an authority; and all thorough-going æsthetes are abnormals liable, if the police

are awake, to land ultimately in jail. As a curiosity of literature which Disraeli did not live long enough to capture, we reproduce, not without comment, the æsthete's estimate of Christ, in which, it will be perceived, it is the æsthete, and not Jesus, who really comes to judgment and receives final sentence. At the end all readers will doubtless agree with Robert Ross, the friend and literary executor of this æsthete, that the writings from which we are about to quote are the product of "a highly artificial nature."

One Christmas season a wretched prisoner in Reading Gaol found his thoughts turning toward Christ. He managed to get hold of a Greek Testament. Every morning he had to begin the day by going down on his knees and washing the floor of his cell. But after he had done this and polished his tins, this dainty Oxford graduate sat down on his iron cot and read a little of the Gospels, a dozen verses or so taken by chance anywhere. He says that it is a delightful way of opening the day; that everyone, even in a turbulent, ill-disciplined life, should do the same; that endless repetition has spoiled for us the freshness, the naïveté, the simple charm of the English version of the Gospels; that excessive repetition is antispiritual, and that when one returns to the original Greek it is like going into a garden of lilies out of some narrow and dark house. He finds a double pleasure in reading the Greek Testament because he thinks it extremely

probable that we have in it the actual expression, the *ipsissima verba*, used by Christ. It has been supposed that Christ talked in Aramaic, but this university scholar believes that the Galilean peasants, like the Irish peasants to-day, were bilingual, and that Greek was the ordinary language of intercourse all over Palestine, and over the Eastern world. He finds delight in thinking that Christ might have conversed with Charmides, and reasoned with Socrates, and talked to Plato in their own tongue and they would have understood him.

Reading his Greek Testament, he is charmed with Christ because Christ has the romantic temperament and says such beautiful things. Christ was the first person who ever said to people that they should live flowerlike lives. And Jesus is charming when he says, "Take no thought for the morrow; is not the soul more than meat and the body more than raiment?" Jesus saw that people should not be too anxious over common material interests; that to be unpractical was a great thing; that one should not bother too much over affairs. The birds and the lilies didn't. Why should man? And Christ took children as the type of what people should try to become, holding them up as examples to their elders. All this the æsthete thinks is charming. Reading his New Testament, he notes also that Christ, like all fascinating persons, had the power, not merely of saying beautiful things himself, but of

making other people say lovely things to him. He says he especially loves the story Saint Mark tells about the Greek woman who, when Christ said to her as a trial of her faith that he could not give her the bread of the children of Israel, answered him that the little dogs who are under the table eat of the crumbs that the children let fall. He thinks that was very clever and witty and winsome in her!

Altogether the æsthete thinks this romantic Christ quite wonderful. He says:

There is something to me almost incredible in the idea of a young Galilæan peasant imagining that he could bear on his own shoulders the burden of the entire world; all that had already been done and suffered, and all that yet to be done and suffered; the sins of Nero, of Cæsar Borgia, of Alexander VI, of him who was Emperor of Rome and Priest of the Sun; the sufferings of those whose name is legion and whose dwelling is among the tombs; oppressed nationalities, factory children, thieves; people in prison, outcasts, those who are dumb under oppression and whose silence is heard only by God: and not merely imagining this but actually achieving it, so that at the present moment all who come in contact with his personality, even though they may not bow to his altar nor kneel before his priest, find that in some way the ugliness of their sin is taken away and the beauty of their sorrow is revealed to them.

Christ's entire life seems to him the most wonderful of poems. He says:

For pity and terror there is nothing in the entire cycle of Greek tragedy to touch it. The absolute purity of the protagonist raises the entire scheme to a height of romantic art from which the sufferings of Thebes and Pelops's line are by their very horror excluded, and shows how wrong Aristotle was when he said in his treatise on the drama

that it would be impossible to bear the spectacle of a blameless one in pain. Not in Æschylus nor Dante, those stern masters of tenderness; not in Shakespeare, the most purely human of all the great artists; not in the whole of Celtic myth and legend, where the loveliness of the world is shown through a mist of tears, and the life of a man is no more than the life of a flower—not in any of these is there anything that, for sheer simplicity of pathos wedded to sublimity of tragic effect, can be said to equal or even approach the last act in the tragedy of Christ's passion. The little supper with his companions, one of whom has already sold him for a price; the anguish in the quiet moonlit garden; the false friend coming close to him so as to betray him with a kiss; the cowardly friend denying him as the bird cried to the dawn; his own utter loneliness, his submission, his acceptance of everything; and along with it all, such scenes as the high priest of orthodoxy rending his raiment in wrath and the magistrate of civil justice calling for water in the vain hope of cleansing himself of that stain of innocent blood that makes him the scarlet figure of history; the coronation ceremony of sorrow, one of the most wonderful things in the whole of recorded time; the crucifixion of the Innocent One before the eyes of his mother and of the disciple whom he loved; the soldiers throwing dice and gambling for his clothes; the terrible death by which he gave the world its most eternal symbol—the cross; and, finally, his burial in the tomb of the rich man, his body swathed in Egyptian linen with costly spices and perfumes, as though he had been a king's son.

The æsthete contemplates all this from the point of view of art alone, and holds this to be the greatest tragedy in literature. He thinks it supremely fit that the most impressive office, the most sacred rite, of the church should be the mystical presentation of the Passion of her Lord, as given in the holy sacrament.



Yet though the life of Christ ends with darkness coming over the face of the earth and the stone rolled to the door of the sepulcher, that life seems to this literary dilettante to be an idyll as really as it is a tragedy. He says:

One always thinks of Christ as a young bridegroom with his companions; as a shepherd straying through a valley with his sheep in search of green meadow or cool stream; as a singer trying to build out of music the walls of the City of God; or as a lover for whose love the whole world was too small. His miracles seem to me to be as exquisite as the coming of spring, and quite as natural. I see no difficulty at all in believing that such was the charm of his personality that his mere presence could bring peace to souls in anguish, and that those who touched his garments or his hands forgot their pain; or that as he passed by on the highway of life, people who had understood nothing of life's mystery saw it clearly, and others who had been deaf to every voice but that of pleasure heard for the first time the voice of Love and found it musical as Apollo's lute; or that evil passions fled at his approach, and men whose dull, unimaginative lives had been but a mode of death rose, as it were, from the grave when he called them; or that when he taught on the hillside the multitude forgot their hunger and thirst and the cares of this world; and that to his friends who listened to him as he sat at meat, the coarse food seemed delicate, and the water had the taste of good wine, and the whole house became full of the odor and sweetness of nard.

One more thing that occurs to him to say about Christ is that "he is the leader of all lovers; who saw that love was the first secret of the world for which the wise men had been looking, and that it was only through love that one could approach either the heart of the leper or the feet of God.

. . . People have tried to make him out an ordinary philanthropist or ranked him as an altruist with the unscientific and sentimental. But he was neither one nor the other. Pity he has, of course, for the poor, for those who are shut up in prisons, for the lowly, for the wretched; but he has far more pity for the rich, for the hard hedonists, for those who waste their freedom in becoming slaves to things, for those who wear soft raiment and live in king's houses. Riches and pleasure seem to him to be really greater tragedies than poverty or sorrow. . . . With a width of imaginative sympathy that almost fills one with awe, Christ took the entire world of the inarticulate, the voiceless world of pain, as his kingdom, and made of himself its mouthpiece. He sought to become eyes to the blind, ears to the deaf, and a cry in the lips of those whose tongues had been tied. His desire was to be to the myriads who had found no utterance, a very trumpet through which they might call to heaven. He made of himself the image of the Man of Sorrows, and as such has fascinated and dominated art as no Greek god ever succeeded in doing. To him love was lord in the fullest meaning of the phrase." He says that "the spirit of love is the spirit of the Christ who is not in churches."

This apostle of æstheticism is not so spell-bound by the Greek gods that he cannot see defect and inferiority in them. He says:

In spite of the white and red of their fair, fleet limbs, they were not really what they appeared to be. The curved brow of Apollo was like the sun's disk over a hill at dawn, and his feet were as the wings of the morning, but he had been cruel to Marsyas and had made Niobe childless. In the steely eyes of Athena there had been no pity for Arachne; the pomp and peacocks of Hero were all that was really noble about her; and the father of all the gods had been too fond of the daughters of men.

And he perceives the superiority of Christ. He says:

Life itself produced, from its lowliest and most humble sphere, one far more marvelous than any of the divinities of Greek mythology. Out of the carpenter's shop at Nazareth came a personality infinitely greater than any pictured by myth or legend, and one destined to reveal mystical meanings and real beauties as none, either on Cithæron or at Enna, had ever done.

But to him Christ's supreme function is that of precursor to the romantic movement in art, the very nature of the Man of Nazareth making him the palpitating center of romance in the world. Wherever the romantic movement is the æsthete finds Christ, or the soul of Christ. He sees Christ's influence in the finest products of architecture, literature, painting, and sculpture; in the cathedral at Chartres, in the Arthurian cycle of legends, and in Dante's Divine Comedy; but not in the dreary classical Renaissance that gave us Petrarch, and Raphael's frescoes, and Palladin architecture, and formal French tragedy, and Saint Paul's Cathedral, and Pope's poetry. He finds Christ's spirit in Romeo and

'Juliet, and in "The Winter's Tale," and in Provençal poetry, and in "The Ancient Mariner," and in Chatterton's "Ballad of Charity"; in Hugo's "Les Misérables," in Baudelaire's "Fleurs du Mal," in the note of pity in Russian novels, in Verlaine's poems, and in the stained glass and tapestries of Burne-Jones and Morris, no less than in the tower of Giotto, in Lancelot and Guinevere, in "Tannhäuser," in the troubled romantic marbles of Michael Angelo, in pointed architecture, and in that love of little children and flowers which from the twelfth century down to our own day has been continually making its appearance in art.

All this elaborate æsthetic eulogy of Jesus is not mere harmless romantic sentiment. Although there may be in it glimpses of a refining and beautifying effect which is a by-product of Christianity, yet it is in fact so superficial as to be frivolous and sacrilegious. When Hurrell Froude said he thought Law's "Serious Call" a very clever book, it seemed to Keble as if Froude had said the Day of Judgment will be a pretty sight. So it seems to us when the æsthete, standing in the august presence of the Son of man, utterly insensitive to moral majesty, dilates only on the romantic charm of Christ. It is almost as if he had said, "Jesus Christ is very pretty." Of the real nature of the incarnate Son of God he has no more perception than the wooden Indian in front of a tobacco shop has of the great-

ness of Abraham Lincoln. He is one of those who have no sense of the divine in Jesus of Nazareth, and no perception of the superhuman in his miracles. The immaculate purity of Christ makes no impression on him, and the ethical pungency of the Master's words goes by him as the idle wind which he regards not. There is no moral fiber in the æsthete and Christ's cutting rebukes of sin and filthiness go through him without resistance or sensation as a Damascus blade would go through a floating wreath of cigar smoke.

He read his New Testament in Greek, this university man did, but a dismally frivolous and grossly self-indulgent life had so vitiated his nature that he seems not much more capable of explaining the Gospels and their Christ than a moth miller fluttering across an open Bible is qualified to expound the pregnant and profound meaning of the inspired pages. He says that every man, at least once in his life, encounters Christ, whether he recognizes him or not. He intimates that he himself has walked over the hills to Emmaus with the Master. But at the end of his high-privileged interview on the road with the risen Lord, he passes on merely remarking with the critical tone of a pleased connoisseur, "What a fascinating person!" This æsthete says the worst vice is shallowness. If this were so, then he would have to be rated one of the worst of vicious men; for, considering his gifts,

advantages, and opportunities, his mental and spiritual shallowness seems almost unparalleled. In presence of the august and awful realities presented in the New Testament, he displays a soul too shallow to float a great thought or a deep feeling, a nature which seems like a puddle in the road, on the surface of which the beautiful white clouds of the sky might be reflected; on the mire of which a few butterfly fancies might alight and sit for a time, idly closing and opening their flowered and filmy wings; while the muddy bottom of the puddle was all acrawl and asquirm with things unbeautiful, slimy, and loathsome.

It is not difficult to guess who was the æsthete's chosen commentator on the Gospels and favorite interpreter of Christ. Evidently he knows his Renan, and his romantic Christ is close akin to the Jesus of the demoralized university professor who Frenchified Christ into a Jewish peasant enamored of the girls of Galilee. This æsthete died in Paris: he should have been born there, for he was essentially French, at home in studios and *cafés chantant*, and other viler resorts. He belonged in the land which, going one step further in taking blasphemous liberties with sacred things, has perpetrated a comic life of Christ.

The case of this æsthete illustrates the powerlessness for good of merely intellectual and artistic companionship and culture. At one period,

before he became evilly notorious, he and Walter Pater were frequently seen together. Thomas Wright gives us a picture of the two in the days of their intercourse and mutual influencing of one another. Chiefly they influenced each other in a merely literary way toward an exquisitely artificial preciousness of style. "These two," says Wright, "made a queer pair when seen together—Pater with his short figure and crooked back, Wilde with his huge bulk, his sunflower, and his peacocky suits, his hair fastidiously arranged after the example of Nero, of whom it is said, 'He did his hair faultlessly—a fact nowhere mentioned by historians.'"

It seems that in Pater's personal influence there was not enough regenerating force, or spermatogenic Christian quality to make any impression. What might have been done for the redemption and elevation of the æsthete if he had fallen, very early in life, under the influence of a really radiant, positive, and potent Christian character, is matter for speculation. But it would seem probable that if this professed devotee of Beauty had made friends with John Ruskin, the divinely anointed high priest of the beautiful, and had surrendered himself to his ennobling influence, then concerning such a friendship something might have been written like what Canon Scott said of Ruskin and Gladstone: "Notwithstanding many differences, and spheres far apart, they were fighters on the same side in the great battle

between good and evil; they both held to the supremacy of conscience over all material things, and asserted the reality of righteousness and the hatefulness of lust and cruelty and wrong. Their spirits drew together because, for both, life had its deep root in piety and had its one and only consummation in the favor and friendship of God."

But the æsthete did not believe in the supremacy of conscience, the reality of righteousness, or the hatefulness of lust. No elevating friendship ennobled his life. He preferred the base and the vile. He says without shame, regret, or apology that he "entertained at dinner the evil things of life"; and with them as chosen boon companions he attained a scandalous infamy. Walter Pater, however, is in no degree chargeable with this man's preference for evil ways. The man proved himself impervious to all spiritual influences. Strict fairness requires us to admit that a faint moral wistfulness, a momentary sensitiveness to goodness seems to appear when he speaks of one of the most beautiful personalities he ever knew—a woman who was by her nature a suggestion of what one might become, and by her influence a real help toward becoming it; a woman who rendered the common air sweet and made what is spiritual seem as simple and natural as sunlight or the sea. She told him of spiritual things and tried to teach him lessons from them, but he says that he could



not believe them, that he was not in the sphere in which belief in such things is attainable. She made him see, far off, the city of God, and it seemed for the moment as if a child might reach it in a summer's day. "And so a *child* could," says the æsthete in a futile flash of discernment; "but with me and such as me it is different." Alas, it is. There was not childlikeness enough in him to make it possible for him to reach even the outskirts of the kingdom of purity and righteousness to which that shining city is metropolis and capital. The beautiful personality who seemed to rouse a momentary wistfulness took no real effect on him. His callous and inveterate baseness made him immune to any pure and holy infection of goodness. At one time he seems to see that a man's heart must be filled with joy when his feet are on the right road and his face set toward the gate which is called beautiful; but as for himself he goes astray in the mist and falls in the mire.

Even the moral majesty and puissant purity of Christ himself had no effect on him. In the presence of the Sinless One he was not abashed, nor by his searching words did he feel himself rebuked. He gives no outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of penitence. Neither the aspect nor the speech of Jesus could smite his soul into repentance. "I don't regret for a single moment having lived as I did," says this artistic convict; "I lived for pleasure to the

full as one should do everything that one does." He boldly declares that he does not blame himself for his evil life. He says:

People thought it dreadful of me to have entertained at dinner the evil things of life, and to have found pleasure in their company. But then, from the point of view through which I, as an artist in life, approached them they were delightfully suggestive and stimulating. The danger was half the excitement.

For all his blatant defiance of the laws of God and man, and all his ungodly deeds which he had most ungodly committed, he makes no apology, feels no shame; rather devises excuses if not justifications for himself. He did acknowledge with mortification and angry self-condemnation, that there was one disgraceful, unpardonable, and forever contemptible action in his life; and that was his allowing himself to appeal to society and the public for help, relief, and release from prison. For that, proud man that he is, he can never forgive himself! But he feels no remorse for anything else, not even when reading his Greek Testament and studying Jesus Christ. As for society, which put handcuffs on him and locked him up and set his dainty, manicured fingers to picking oakum for two years, he meant to take triumphant revenge some day on the cruel British public. He intended to execute some masterpiece of literary art that should prove his superior genius and bring society to his feet. He makes no promise to reform his

evil ways, for he says that to him "reformations in morals are meaningless, while to purpose to be a better man is a piece of unscientific cant." The only regeneration, renewal, and reformation that he believes in come about in the following way: "Those who have the artistic temperament look out with new eyes on life because they have listened to one of Chopin's nocturnes, or handled Greek things, or read the story of the passion of some dead man for some dead woman whose hair was like threads of fine gold and whose mouth was as a pomegranate." Such are the things on which the æsthete relies to exert transforming power and which say to the man on whom they take effect, "Behold I make all things new." Recently, in the pulpit of a church which emphasizes ritual and the æsthetics of formal worship, an extravagant glorification of music exploded at its soaring climax in a declaration that "the greatest purifying and uplifting power in the world is music." A strange sort of Christian church it is which knows of no mightier power than music for the purging away of the world's sins, the soothing of its sorrows, and the healing of its virulent diseases!

The imprisoned æsthete intends so soon as he gets out of jail, to assert himself as an artist. "If I can produce only one beautiful work of art," he says, "I shall be able to rob malice of its venom, and cowardice of its sneer, and to pluck out the tongue of scorn by the roots." He hopes

that there will come into his work a deeper note, clearer vision, greater intensity of apprehension, more unity of passion and directness of impulse, richer cadences, more curious effects, simpler architectural order, a finer æsthetic quality. If this can be, then he will dazzle the world, burnish bright his tarnished name, triumph over society, and revenge himself upon his enemies.

The one unique thing about Christ, the æsthete thinks, is that he had to perfection the artistic nature and the romantic temperament. The chief charm in him is that he is just like a work of art. The reason why he is so fascinating to artists is that "he has all the color-elements of life—mystery, strangeness, pathos, suggestion, ecstasy, love. He wakens wonder." Now, Christ being just like a work of art, and the æsthete being a connoisseur and appraiser of such works, he proceeds to examine, criticize, and commend Christ just as he would a statue or a painting, a poem, a mosaic, a gem, a piece of embroidery, a length of lace, or a character in fiction or the drama—Shakespeare's "Hamlet," Thackeray's "Henry Esmond," or Browning's "Caponisacchi." He is not distantly related to those ethical culturists to whom the Bible is as a strain of music. To him the New Testament is only a part of the literature of romance.

In himself this poor voluptuary is of no consequence to the Christian world. His name could never be mentioned in these pages were it not

for important things which his case illustrates and the moral lessons which his miserable example points. In general, his account of Christ illustrates the truth of Bushnell's saying that "a mind discolored and smirched by evil will put a blurred and misshapen look on everything." His vision distorts even the matchless figure of Christ until the upright and perfect Model stoops hunchbacked after the pattern of the æsthete's own moral deformity.

We have in this man an exhibition of the human tendency to think God to be altogether such an one as ourselves. The Ethiop's God has thick lips and woolly hair. The Christ of Matthew Arnold is a modern apostle of sweetness and light, very bitter and severe on Philistines of all kinds. The Jesus of Renan comes near being a nineteenth century Frenchman. And the Christ conceived by this artistic person is an artist, a romantic poet, looking on life with an æsthete's eyes. This æsthetic critic sees a close resemblance between the life of Christ and the life of an artist. He says that whoever would lead a Christlike life must be absolutely himself and be independent of rules; because "for Christ there were no laws, there were exceptions merely"! He selected as his types of the Christlike life "the painter to whom the world is a pageant and the poet for whom the world is a song." As to the words of the Master, he holds that their value is æsthetic, and that everything

Christ said can be transferred immediately into the sphere of art and there find its complete fulfillment. He sees in Christ not a moral teacher, much less the Saviour of the world, but merely a poet, an æsthete like himself.

He betrays his maudlin condition of moral aberration most when he comments on our Saviour's treatment of sin. He thinks it is when this romantic Christ deals with the sinner that he is most romantic. He says that "the world had always loved the saint as being the nearest possible approach to the perfection of God," but that Christ "always loved the sinner as being the nearest possible approach to the perfection of man." An insanely perverse statement, the effect of which would be to cover this æsthetic sinner in among the rarest specimens of human perfection, and very dear to Christ. He goes on to say that "Christ's primary aim was not to reform people. To turn an interesting thief into a tedious honest man was not his aim." What he exposes in that absurd statement besides his perverse misunderstanding of Christ, is that he himself finds thieves interesting and honest men tedious, the sole effect of his words being to classify him with reprobates. He says, further, that Christ "regarded sin as being in itself a beautiful, holy thing, and a mode of perfection." He admits: "This seems a very dangerous idea. It is—all great ideas are dangerous." He says: "That it was Christ's creed admits of no doubt.

That it is the true creed I don't doubt myself."  
"Sin in itself a beautiful, holy thing"! Sin is  
unchangeably and forever that abominable thing  
which God and his Christ hate, unspeakably  
malignant, hideous, and damnable. But to this  
man sin and holiness are of equivalent value.  
He dwells in a realm

Where Evil saith to Good, "My brother,  
My brother, I am one with thee."

That is monism with a vengeance.

Continuing his strange misrepresentations, he goes on with something still more stupidly absurd, indeed, atrociously libelous, when he says: "Christ, had he been asked, would have said—I feel quite certain about it—that the moment the prodigal son fell on his knees and wept, he made his having wasted his substance with harlots, his swine-herding and hungering for the husks they ate, beautiful and holy moments in his life." He says "it is difficult for most people to grasp this idea." Not only difficult but impossible! For by divine warning and by sore experience, men know that no penitential tears can alter the sinister, virulent, and direfully disastrous nature of sin. And there is no power on earth or in heaven that can make dissolute moments and shameful actions beautiful and holy. How horribly wrong the æsthete is when he says, "All who come in contact with Christ's personality find the ugliness of their sin taken away"! On the contrary, in the light of his

presence wickedness feels itself exposed and rebuked; and by contrast with his holiness the ugliness of sin is hideously intensified. Equally wrong is the idea that "Christ's morality is all sympathy, just what morality should be." Did they think so whom he denounced as a generation of vipers and warned of the damnation of hell? Did the money-changers think so when the sting of his lash drove them out of the temple? Christ's morality is as far from being all sympathy as the Ten Commandments are from being a flax-seed poultice.

Other statements, similarly perverse and preposterous, follow. "There were Christians before Christ," he says. "The unfortunate thing is that there have been none since." He modifies this at once by making one exception. He does not go quite as far as Nietzsche, who said that the first and only Christian was nailed to the cross on Calvary. Our æsthete admits that Saint Francis of Assisi was a Christian; the reason of this being that God gave Saint Francis the soul of a poet which made the way to perfection not difficult for him. Four pages farther on he makes three more exceptions, and says that since Christ there have been three other Christians besides Saint Francis; and they were Dante, Paul Verlaine, whom he calls the one Christian poet since Dante, and Prince Kropotkin, a man said by him to have "the soul of that beautiful white Christ which seems coming out of Russia." Surely "a



highly artificial nature" is on exhibition here. Could anything more artificial, bizarre, fantastic, grotesquely false be imagined? In the light of his absurd and inane comments on Christ it is plain that to the realm of true art this man is but a clown, a vulgar mountebank. If the artist's business be, in Wordsworth's phrase, "to contemplate the spectacle of life with appropriate emotions," then this man fails totally as an artist; for, in presence of the supreme elements of life, he never manifests the appropriate emotion, and in the presence of the Lord of life he never makes the suitable comment, much less offers the appropriate homage.

It is not too much to say that there is something absolutely revolting in the shallow æsthete's dilettante and fondling complimenting of Christ. His superficial eulogies take offensive liberties with the ineffable majesty of our Lord's sinless purity. As listeners and onlookers, do we not all feel somewhat as we might if the sinful woman in Simon's house, instead of bowing reverently at his feet in self-abhorrence, with penitential tears and costly sacrifice of adoration, had approached his head and had run her fingers familiarly through his locks, saying foolishly, "What beautiful hair you have!"? Do not all Christian souls wince at the essential sacrilege of this art connoisseur's comments on the Saviour, as one would shrink from a painting of a satyr kissing the face of a Madonna? Do we

not shudder, as one at the altar might, on finding a toad in the baptismal font, a spider in the communion cup?

One true saying in "De Profundis" is that "Christ creates the mood in which alone he can be understood." But a vulgar voluptuary seems incapable of any such mood. The romantic Christ portrayed by the æsthete is as "highly artificial" as himself, as unreal as an opium-eater's dream, the product of a nature entirely meretricious, habitually vicious, and hopelessly besotted. In one way or another all human lives confirm some one portion of Holy Scripture. The passage which this poor sophisticated and sensualized soul illustrates is, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: . . . neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned."

## A LAY SERMON

IN September, 1879, a raw-looking farm-boy, in rudest rustic raiment, walked eleven miles from the little village of Roca to register as a student at the University of Nebraska. This plowboy of Roca did not dream that he was on his way to the highest academic honors; but in the next twenty years he made for himself a career of unique distinction, teaching and lecturing at Johns Hopkins and Leland Stanford Universities and at the University of Nebraska. He grappled skillfully with the hard social problems of great cities. His book on "American Charities" became an authority and a classic. His lectures on "Industrial Corporations" opened a new branch of scientific study. And always his pure heart and lofty mind radiated an influence for righteousness.

In 1897 Amos Griswold Warner delivered four lay sermons before the Chapel Union of Stanford University. His hearers were mostly students interested in scientific studies, and were of various faiths, and some of no avowed faith. In order that he might reach all of them where they were, he limited the view of these addresses to this world and to forces which are apprehensible without any special revelation. The message is therefore limited. The purpose of the

addresses was to derive a religious impulse from the subject-matter of scientific study, and, preaching from facts, to deduce a plea for the lifted heart and the ennobled life from the dusty things of daily experience, which it was the week-day business of his hearers to sort and study.

Naturally he found one of the religious doctrines most easily approachable and supportable from the side of natural facts to be that of Vicarious Sacrifice. This doctrine has been sorely ridiculed and railed at by the enemies of Christianity. A certain lecturer so hated the doctrine that one man could suffer for the sins of another that he vowed never to speak upon any subject whatever without contriving to denounce that abominated doctrine. Another skeptic liked to tell of the proceedings in Chinese courts of justice, where the criminal is allowed to hire another man to take his place and to receive the lashes to which he was sentenced. When the substitute has borne the prescribed whipping, justice is held to be satisfied. And the skeptic then remarks that this seems to him a reasonable method of administering justice compared with the plan of putting the son of a ruler to death as an atonement for the disobedience of the subjects.

It must be confessed that the doctrine of Vicarious Sacrifice is sometimes so baldly stated as to seem hideous. The real transgressor escapes retribution and the punishment falls upon an innocent party, who may or may not be willing to

make the expiatory offering. These innocent sufferers for the sins of others appear constantly in the pages of myth and legend as well as of religious history, from the Greek Iphigenia to the Jewish scapegoat driven into the desert with the sins of the people upon its back. Sometimes the innocent person is offered to appease the wrath of a mythological god who delights in sacrificial suffering and must be given just so much of it in return for disobedience; and sometimes, as in the Greek legends, the sacrifice is demanded by a destiny or fate too impersonal to feel anger or delight, but as unswerving as what our modern time calls Laws of Nature. But whether it be an impersonal fate or some malign little deity that requires the suffering of the innocent, it is a well-known fact that many of the religions of the world contain in some form the idea of vicarious sacrifice—the sufferings of the innocent atoning for the sins of the guilty. Now, is this doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, so widely prevalent and so deeply rooted in the human mind, a needless nightmare of belief? Are the religions of the world perverted and astray in this idea?

It seems not too much to say that anything which is common to so many and so varied religious systems presumably contains some central and essential truth. And the fact is that this despised and ridiculed doctrine, that the innocent must suffer for the guilty and that the guilty are sometimes relieved of some of the consequences

of their wrongdoing through the sufferings of the innocent, is *not* based wholly on religious dogma. It is based upon observed *facts* which are a part of the system of things, and which belong to the regular course of events in the natural world. The suffering of the innocent for the guilty is a phenomenon which has existed in practically all times and places. Whether men approve of it or not, it is clearly an actual, and presumably an indispensable, part of the cosmic plan. The plan of having the innocent suffer for the guilty and the guilty profit by that suffering is not at all peculiar to religion. And the skeptic who ridicules and denounces religion for this doctrine must also ridicule and denounce the entire system of things—in short, he must denounce the universe and its Creator.

Professor Warner did not try to defend the Christian doctrine of vicarious sacrifice, nor to explain the cosmic fact, but merely examined in a few of its bearings vicarious suffering as a fact which history records and science reports. In doing this he kept well within the field of easy observation and common knowledge. Following is a part of his statement:

That wrongdoing has had effects on others than the wrongdoer is too common and too commonly observed to need much dwelling on. The murderer who has been duly hanged is not more dead than his innocent victim, and about each of them is a wide circle of relatives and associates and fellow citizens who must take more or less of the consequences of both the misdeed and its expiation. While it might be very

nice if all adults could take the consequences of their own action and of nobody else's, society is not arranged that way. "He has paid the penalty," we hear it said after some noted debauchee or great defaulter has committed suicide; and then follows the reflection, "Yes, but how many others have paid it with him?" Often the one who makes a mistake or commits a crime escapes most of the consequences. The engineer or builder of a great dam is at fault, and the people of Johnstown are swept out of existence. When the tower of Siloam falls, exact justice would prescribe that only the architect and master builder should be under it; but these worthies had no doubt long since passed away. "Think ye they were sinners above all others on whom the tower of Siloam fell? I tell you, Nay." Perhaps the wife whose husband becomes a drunkard deserves to suffer for the mistake or weakness of having associated herself with a man not finally able to control his appetites; but it hardly seems just that she, as is commonly the case, should suffer far more than the brute who inflicts the suffering. The people who introduced slavery into the American colonies made a mistake and perhaps committed a sin. They were not punished for it, at least not in this world. In the Northern colonies, where slavery did not pay, their descendants were not much punished for it except during a great national convulsion. But at the South, where it proved that slavery did pay, and where it continued to pay increasingly large returns because of inventions and developments that no one could have foreseen, the descendants of its introducers were most grievously punished and are being punished yet. This leaves the evils suffered by the blacks entirely out of the question. "After me the deluge," said Louis XIV, and the deluge did come long after he had passed away, and it submerged the only well-meaning king France had had for nearly two hundred years. Those that sow the wind frequently die and leave the inevitable whirlwind for some one else to reap.

Justice to individuals is not nature's specialty. Their lives are too short for her to take much account of them. Like the Greek fates, she exacts punishment for wrong-

doing, but frequently exacts it from those who did not do the wrong. Instead of making special efforts to get only fit people born into the world, nature's way is to bring many into existence and then kill off those who do not suit. "If you want an omelet you must break a few eggs," said the Corsican. "If you want the fit to survive you must smash the unfit, and any others who get mixed up with them," says nature. This is effective, but looks wasteful, and it certainly is rather hard on the unfit who are pitchforked into existence, without their consent, and then pitchforked out again because they did not happen to be something else than that which they have been made. Countless millions have been exterminated merely because they did not properly "adapt internal conditions to external conditions"; and yet not one of them ever understood that this was what was required of them until Herbert Spencer said so. Clearly those who indict the Grecian gods or the Hebrew God for cruelty find but a "stony stepmother" when they fly to nature. That the innocent must suffer, and often must suffer for the sins of the guilty, *is a fact* so inwrought in all human affairs, so manifest in all the operations of nature, that to quarrel with it is as idle as to quarrel with the precession of the equinoxes.

Weak minds, like the friends who tried to comfort Job, have often taken the contrary view and have insisted that suffering is always and only the consequence of demerit. But anyone able to look squarely at facts, like Job himself, has seen that this is not true, and has given up trying to account for existing conditions except by falling back on faith in a higher power, and "believing where he cannot see" "that good shall somehow be the final goal of ill." It should be said, however, that as the wrongdoer stands a little nearer to the wrong than anybody else he is somewhat more likely to be hit by the consequences. In the long run and on the average this is true. Were it not true, no progress would be made and nature would be convicted not only of brutality but of incompetence. This she has never been. Sermons from the text, "The wages of sin is death," can be based on facts as well as on Scripture. Because the innocent often suffer, no one need to conclude that



it is a matter of indifference whether or not he is innocent. Even were the physical fortunes of the innocent and guilty the same, which, on the average, they are not, conscience and public opinion would make a difference greatly in favor of the innocent. Though the murdered man and the hanged murderer are both dead, most of us would prefer to be the former rather than the latter. Statute law is continually running correction lines through the conditions of life established by nonhuman nature, doing what it can to make the lot of the transgressor harder and harder; and the religions of the world lend their powerful aid in the same general direction.

This lay preacher then inquired whether it can be shown that any good comes out of the great mass of undeserved suffering that falls upon the relatively innocent individuals of the world, or whether all this unmerited distress is sheer waste. There it is, a fact beyond dispute. Is there any good in it? In searching with this question, as with a lighted torch in the darkness, the effort should be to keep close to verifiable facts. From the great mass of undeserved suffering our preacher took out for examination that part which the sufferers have voluntarily incurred or have joyfully borne in order to shield others from the consequences of misfortune, or weakness, or ignorance, or sin. The quantity of such suffering is not so small as cynics would have us believe. He noticed this voluntary self-sacrificing suffering as prompted by love of family, love of country, and love of truth; beginning with the circle of blood-relationship where the primary affections have range and force.

1. There are the enormous sacrifices parents make for their offspring, both among lower animals and among human beings. Even among as low an order as the birds it is not true that all an individual has<sup>d</sup> he will give for his life. They will give up their lives to save their young, but not their young to save their lives. Hunt the California quail when they have no nests or young, and you find that self-preservation is the first law with them and that they know how to obey it most skillfully. But go among them when they have young, and you find that the law of self-preservation has given way before the higher law of self-sacrifice; the struggle for life has given place to "the struggle for the lives of others." This seems a trivial illustration, but perhaps for that very reason we can view it more calmly than if something nearer to ourselves were taken. The struggle to preserve offspring, to shield the immature from suffering, which their weakness and inexperience might bring upon them, has been treated at length by Drummond, under the name "the struggle for the life of others." A considerable part of each generation sacrifices itself for the next, and the higher we rise in the scale of development the greater and longer continued are such sacrifices. Drummond says that it might almost be reasoned from the facts that the whole purpose of organic life from the beginning has been the final development of mothers—the mammalia. In this order the sacrifices of parent for child are greatest and in the highest species of the order they are continued through the longest series of years. It were idle to take from literature or human experience examples of parental sacrifice. The members of a student body stand so close to the parental sacrifices by which the individuals have benefited that they see them very clearly in some ways. And yet they will quite certainly obtain a fuller and juster view of them when the perspective and experiences of years have instructed the vision and reduced the varied facts of life to more just proportions. What have been the consequences of all this sacrifice of the individuals of one generation for the individuals of the next? Is it all a waste? Is there, let us ask in reply, anything better in human affairs than the

reciprocal love of parent and child which has its origin in the sacrifice of one for the protection of the other? If the tendency of evolution seems to be in the direction of greater and greater quantities of vicarious sacrifice, is it not bringing also a wealth of pure affection without which the world were poor and bleak?

As the generations of men are bound together by these heavy debts which can never be paid directly, but only by affection and gratitude and the passing on of the obligation to a succeeding generation, so, in some sort, do the sexes stand related to each other. Superficially considered, one of them seems to have committed an undue share of the sins of the world, and the other to have borne an undue share of the consequent suffering. More justly stated, one of them has served the race chiefly through action, and the other chiefly through endurance. The history of the physically weaker sex can be so written as to read like one long story of oppression and injustice. But carefully considered, much of what looked like oppression is seen to have no human origin, but to be the result of forces which neither sex could control; of those fundamental forces which have shaped our minds and bodies, and which from the beginning decreed the evolution of sex. As this fact has come to be recognized by both the life of endurance has been transmitted into the life of power. The glory of suffering gladly born for affection's sake has transformed the woman and subdued the man. When our Civil War came to an end Europe supposed that our armies could not be easily disbanded. There were many reasons that conspired to make our soldiers return gladly to the ways of peace, but perhaps the strongest was this, that so many of the soldiers knew that at home good women were waiting for them and suffering with them, and when the war was over would expect them to be men. So they were drawn back from the life of hardship and excitement and danger to the simple duties of home, and so through all the years is every manly man steadied and upheld and strengthened by the thought of those members of the race who do perhaps less than he but endure more. What he would not do for himself or for selfish gain he is willing to do for the sake of

one whose burden is different from his. Thus the over-plus of endurance that falls to the lot of one sex becomes, if rightfully received and borne, a source of strength and affection and joy to all, contributing to the relation of the sexes much of that which is purest and noblest in them, and to the general endowment of the human heart an emotion fit to rank with parental and filial love.

2. Next to the affections which unite us to those near by relationship, one of the strongest human emotions is patriotism, and this also is watered by the blood and tears of self-sacrifice. It is not more true that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church than that the bodies of those who have willingly died for fatherland make the foundations of national unity and success. To atone for old wrongs or to insure peace and prosperity to their successors men of all times and many races have been willing to accept and verify in life and death the Roman adage that it is sweet to die for one's country. We can account for the survival of this sentiment by evolutionary philosophy. Races that had it survived, and those that did not have it went to pieces. But from the standpoint of the individual we can account for his action only by assuming that to him the joy of sacrificing himself for others, rendering for their sakes "the last full measure of devotion," was greater than he could realize from any course dictated by what we commonly call selfishness. The unearned suffering that came to him was transmuted by his spirit of devotion into a privilege and a glory. We have referred to the great suffering entailed upon this country by the mistake or sin of the introduction and toleration of African slavery. Here was a typical case of sin-entailed suffering, and our war President himself suggested the equation that it might be necessary that every drop of blood drawn by the lash should be paid by another drawn by the sword. Yet it was not those whose hands had wielded the lash through two hundred years from whose veins was drawn by the sword the atoning blood. In part it was from their descendants, but largely it came from the young and the strong and the brave of the land who had no measure of personal responsibility whatever for the wrong their lives

were given to explate. We who have come upon the scene since that struggle cannot appreciate it fully, but perhaps we can appreciate it more fully than other struggles because of our nearness to it and to those who took part in it.

To give a vivid idea of what sacrifices the war for the Union involved on the part of those engaged, Professor Warner took from an old magazine an account of a night in the Wilderness campaign. It was written by an officer who spent the first part of the night struggling through roadless and boggy woods to rejoin his company. His horse became disabled, and he proceeded on foot.

When he found his regiment they were resting as well as they could in the mud of a slight depression where they were partly shielded from the fire of the enemy. It was raining, and the men were sick and weak from lack of sleep and lack of food. Their work for the night was to assault at intervals the opposing breastworks of the enemy, and after each charge up the slippery hill to retire into the mudhole to rest a little, re-form, and charge again. There was absolutely no hope that they could take the fortifications that they assailed, and yet their attacks were not to be sham attacks. Their work was to keep up a steady and real pounding that would oblige the Confederate general to leave some thousands of his men to defend these breastworks and make it wholly out of the question for him to withdraw them to reënforce some other part of his line where the Federal forces presumably planned to make a more hopeful attack. As the officer who tells the story came up an old gray-headed private was asking an officer to excuse him from further service for the night. He was manifestly sick, and said that he had been suffering from dysentery for some days. But the officer to whom he appealed said with the petulance of fatigue that they were all more or less sick and that anybody who could

stand up would have to keep his place in line. Just as he had given his answer and the applicant was turning away a bullet of unusual reach sped toward them from the enemy, and the old man dropped dead in the mud—excused.

The men who thus suffered were not responsible for the wrong in consequence of which they suffered; and the American nation, for love of which they were willing to suffer, may truthfully say of them, "They were wounded for our transgressions, and with their stripes we are healed." And not only this nation but all nations survive and prosper because of the sacrifices of their sons, sacrifices not always bloody but always real. Always and everywhere in history the individual offers himself in some form and in some degree for the healing of the nation. Nor is there any hope of a nation whose sons do not stand ready to sacrifice themselves for it—to die, if need be, that it may live.

This lay preacher pointed out that many noble souls have made sacrifices for the promotion of truth, for the cultivation of science, and the discovery of laws and facts which bring benefits to mankind. The sum total of self-denying work performed by those who toil at ill-remunerated tasks is very great and vastly valuable to mankind. And the spirit of self-sacrifice is in many of the world's workers. Of this there are some modern forms differing from the old. The old self-sacrifice walked the pestilential streets to aid the sick and bury the dead; the new does the slow

work of the laboratory which shall discover how to prevent the plague or stamp it out forever. The Red Cross still has its heroes and heroines, mitigating by their tender ministries the horrors of battlefields; but not less heroic and useful are they who labor unselfishly against many discouragements to advance the cause of international arbitration. Dr. O. W. Holmes was always insisting on the superior value of preventive over curative medicine. After the doctor is called there is commonly nothing to be done but to make the best of a bad business. If the spirit of the worker is right, the laboratory and the library and the school give opportunities for pure self-sacrifice in lofty service, as well as do the battlefield and the hospital. Whoever devotes himself to service, in long, unselfish labor, adds to the well-being and diminishes the woe of the world, as surely as does he who in sudden sacrifice pours out his soul unto death upon a battlefield. In all spheres of life men and women are living to bless the world, to scatter its darkness, dry its tears, and heal its wounds—are causing their lives to “be to other souls the cup of strength in some great agony.”

Vicarious sacrifice, suffering for the good of others, is an omnipresent fact, obviously necessary to the cosmic plan, part of the universal system of things. Does the skeptic ask, “Why were the sufferings of Christ necessary to atone for, and able to remedy, the sins of the world?”

Ask him, "Why is there in the world so much suffering of the innocent for the sake of the guilty, and so many benefits which could never have come to us except by somebody else's sacrifice and suffering?" One thing is sure—wherever any part of the world's burden and woe is taken up and borne for love's sake, there a new portion of moral health, nobleness, and hopefulness comes in to strengthen and purify and sweeten the world. The atonement of Christ—his vicarious sacrifice for the sins of the world, his suffering in our stead—is not a strange, improbable, incredible thing, but is all of a piece with the whole construction and custom of human life, and in harmony with God's way of working in all things. Whittier was not, as has been claimed by some, a Unitarian, but by his own declaration a Quaker of the old school, who said he saw no reason why the orthodox Quakers and the Methodists might not unite. So alike are they in doctrine and in spirit. That he was well aware of the reasonableness of the atonement, and of its harmony with universal laws and principles, is indicated in the lines:

Wherever through the ages rise  
The altars of self-sacrifice,  
Where love its arms hath opened wide,  
Or man for man hath calmly died,  
I see the same white wings outspread  
That hovered o'er the Master's head.

. . . . .

Good cause it is for thankfulness



That the world blessing of His life  
With the long past is not at strife;  
*That the great marvel of His death*  
*To the one order witnesseth:*  
No doubt of changeless goodness wakes,  
No link of cause and sequence breaks,  
But, *one with nature, rooted is*  
*In the eternal verities.*

## A SOUTHERN EVANGELIST

SAM P. JONES was a rough and daring evangelist who had his mission and did some effective work. In his way Jones was a genius. Also, he knew the way of the transgressor; he had trodden it nearly to the gates of death. He knew what wages the devil pays; he had been the devil's hired servant for years. He knew there is a hell; he had been there. He was relentless after sinners, knowing their haunts and hiding places, their tricks and turns, their meanness, falseness, and refuges of lies. He was a terror wherever he opened his batteries. He used extreme plainness of speech, as for example: "Some of your society women object to my plainness of speech; and yet you will go to the theater and witness vulgar plays and listen to indecent insinuations till near midnight. I sometimes give slop to the hogs, but I never get down in the pen and eat with them." Again: "If I say a thing that hurts the feelings of a man who prays in his family, and pays his just debts, and hasn't more than one wife, and lives right in the estimation of good men—if I hurt that sort of a man, I will apologize every time. But I will die before I will apologize to you uncircumcised Philistines. I won't do it." "The Lord Jesus never lost a chance to pour hot shot and grape and canister into the

scribes and Pharisees, and they are the gentlemen I'm after." Again: "If you lie down with dogs, you'll get up with fleas." When some one says to this evangelist, "Jones, what are you always fighting the theater for? Don't you think Joe Jefferson is a worthy and good man?" he replies: "Certainly, I do; and if you'll kill off all the tribe but Joe, I'll never say another word against theaters."

Here is his definition of heaven and hell: "Hell is the center of gravity for wickedness; heaven is the center of gravity for righteousness." To his brother preachers he said, "We do not speak with authority any longer. If I should go into Edison's laboratory and he should tell me not to touch a live wire, I wouldn't touch it; I would know that if I did, I would be an angel in a minute. But preachers tell a man he will go to hell if he keeps on sinning, and he goes out of church saying to himself, 'Shucks, I've heard that before.' " Another plain word: "When a preacher is more concerned about his next appointment than about his present success, he is on the down grade." "You preachers ought to wallop those old deacons in your church that you know are not doing right. Maybe they won't pay you as much as they do now, but the consciousness of duty done beats all the money in the world. . . . It is easier to do your duty than to find a lie that will answer for an excuse."

We know no reason to question the truth of

Sam Jones' statement when he said: "As for my personal ministry I have never counted the cost. I have been no respecter of persons. Dudes and bums, millionaires and paupers, gold buggers and silver diggers, when the band begins to play, are all alike to me. I think I owe my success as an evangelist to the fact that I have something to say and say it. I use plain Anglo-Saxon language. I don't say decayed; I say rotten. I don't say penetrate, but pierce. I don't say donkey, but jackass. I don't say pandemonium, but hell; I don't say 'Home of the Good'; but heaven. And I always liken a fellow to the thing he is most like, whether he be like a hog, a dog, a fox, or a skunk. The plain truth plainly spoken is, I think, the most omnipotent thing in the world." This declaration of war sounds like Garrison's in the *Liberator*: "I have entered the fight against the devil never to give up. I will kick him as long as I have a foot. I will hit him as long as I have a fist. I will bite him as long as I have a tooth; and then gum him till I die." This also he said about himself: "I thank God for the disposition I have to be with the under dog. If you want to find Sam Jones, just scratch under the bottom dog. If I'm not there, I've just gone to dinner and will be back in a few minutes."

Jones was a Southerner. When a Northerner asked him if he believed all negroes would steal he replied, "No, I don't even believe all white folks will steal." For some churches he has a

whip: "You pack your preacher in an ice house and abuse him all the year because he don't sweat. . . . Show me praying pews and I will show you a powerful pulpit. I know of one church where twenty were praying for the millennium and a hundred were playing for the booby prize in a progressive euchre party. Such Christians as those would not be in heaven six months before they would be gambling for each other's crowns." "When a church reaches the point where its services are all formal, where there is nothing but formality, then religion with it is nothing more than what you see represented in a watermelon patch—a scarecrow put up on a forked stick." "I can sort of put up with a fellow in the church that won't do what we call church work, but who'll pay well. There isn't a railroad in heaven or earth that don't charge extra for a sleeper, and you ought to pay it. But these fellows that don't pay any and don't pray any, are the growlers, and you ought to build an addition to every church in this country, and call it 'The Growlery,' and run them in there."

He has sharp words enough for preachers and churches, but when men of the world point to hypocrites in the church, he replies: "Yes, we have some hypocrites; we got them out of your crowd, and you can have them back where they belong, if you want them." This evangelist is no fanatic; he is sane, sound, intelligible: "What is salvation? Well, when you sum it all up, here

it is in a nutshell: Salvation is loving everything that God loves and hating everything that God hates. What a man loves and what a man hates determine his character." Here is sound sense: "I like the fellow who works just like there wasn't any God, and then trusts God just like he himself couldn't do a thing. . . . I pray for my daily bread, but I have to hunt for my corn pone with the sweat running down the hoe-handle."

We pick out some brief bits: "Heaven is just the other side of where a fellow is doing his level best." "Let's make it fashionable to love God and keep his commandments." "If some of these old money-buggers get to heaven, they'll be out before breakfast digging up the golden streets." "If the devil were mayor of this city, I don't think he would make any changes. I don't see how he could get the gate to destruction any wider open; how he could have any more saloons or gambling-hells or bawdy houses or dirty theaters, or how he could get up a dirtier set of grafting, wire-working politicians to run his business for him. . . . Some people seem to have a queer kind of reverence for the devil; they act like they would have me call him Mr. Devil, or Colonel Devil, or Major Devil. I call some of his sons major or colonel, but I just call him plain old devil." "Some of you fellows are so little I could put half a dozen of you in my vest pocket and never know you were there except

when you got a-straddle of my toothpick. You mean, stingy, narrow-minded little rascals, a fly could sit on the bridge of your nose and paw you in one eye and kick you in the other. If I should get an order for some of you mean little chaps, I wouldn't send you by express. I'd just put a dozen of you in a matchbox and put a one-cent stamp on you and send you by mail."

Sam Jones thus explains why he doesn't always use dainty, urbane language: "When you hear me drop down in style and grammar, you may know I'm just seeking the level of my crowd. I could preach nice if I wanted to, but nice preaching has been tried on you a long time. If nice preaching could have saved this town, you all would have had your wings ten years ago. . . . You complain that I've stirred up this town and raised a muss. The fact is I've let down my bucket a little too deep and stirred the mud. It's your mud and my bucket." "When two men are walking down the road and a dog following them, you can't tell whose dog it is until the road forks. Then you can tell. The dog will follow his master. Next Wednesday night the theater will open and the prayer meeting bell will ring. Right there the road will fork and if your wife will keep her eye on you she will find out whose dog you are." "If I could only have religion in one place, I would have it in my right hand, so that I could go out and do something for God." "I haven't seen a horse race in twenty-five years.

Not that I object to fine horses, but I object to the scrubby little devils who are around the race track betting on them. The horses are thoroughbreds, the men are scrubs." "The best way to kill an enemy is to love him to death. Then you don't make his wife a widow, and nobody has to bury him, and you won't be punished." "I have seen preachers who look as melancholy as if their Father in heaven was dead and hadn't left them a cent. . . . Many a man imagines he has got religion because he's solemn, when it's only liver-complaint." "Going to the theater to reform it is like drinking a barrel of liquor to get it out of the way. . . . In a Georgia town a number of girls married men to reform them, and now that town is full of little whip-poor-will widows. . . . I have seen wives who set wine around on their table in the first years of their married life, and cut up a big shine according to the latest fashion of society—I have seen such a wife with streaming eyes and with a face that God must pity to look at, begging me: 'O, help me to save my husband! He's gone forever.'" "The devil can get into anything. I have seen him get into a horse, and he wouldn't pull a hen off of the roost. I have seen him get into a baby, and it would squall enough to break up a meeting. I have seen him get into a man, and he would fuss and fume and cuss a blue streak. I have seen him get into a woman, and—Well, I never waited to see what happened."



Here is a bit of reasoning: "The fact that I want to live forever is a strong proof that I shall live forever. God never made a fish with fins until he made an ocean for it to swim in. God never made a bird until he made an atmosphere for it to fly in. And God never put the longings for immortality in a soul until he had made a grand heaven to satisfy these longings."

Sam Jones was not a complainer against life. He says: "This world is a thousand times better to me than I have been to it; I have no kick or complaint. I don't kick anyway. I am like the fellow that got both legs cut off by the train. They gathered around and began condoling with him. He looked up and said, 'Gentlemen, I am not kicking.'"

Speaking of God's promise to provide for his own, he says: "I tell you, God Almighty will take care of an honest man if he has to put the angels on half-rations for twelve months."

Urging gratitude for the divine goodness, he goes after the ungrateful thus: "Twenty-four years ago I looked at God's love to my wife, to my child and to me, and in gratitude I said: 'O, God, what dost thou ask of me?' And all that he asked was that I should love him in return. Now, I am as frail a man as lives. I have my faults, I have my weaknesses, but I have won the love of my dog. When I go home from a trip my dog Hero runs to meet me. He climbs up on me and kisses me like a dog kisses a man, and

says: 'If you want to hunt to-morrow, I will go with you and find birds as fast as you can shoot them.' I say: 'Hero, why do you love me so?' He wags his tail and looks up and says in his way: 'Because you are so good to me.' I have won the love of my horse. I go down to the stable and he lays his face against mine and talks to me in his language, and says: 'I am so glad to see you back. If you want a horseback ride, have Joe put the saddle on me and I will give you every gait that a horse ever went.' And I say to him: 'Dexter, why do you love me so?' And he says: 'Because you are so good to me.' My brother, if you do not love God, who has been so good to you all of your life, you are lower down than my dog or my horse. God's goodness to you is enough to melt a rock."

Jones went to hear a lecture on sociology, and gives the following description of the lecture and what he said to the lecturer afterward: "He told us all the ologies—biology, geology, and zoölogy—and how he did capture that crowd! This was his peroration: 'Now, ladies and gentlemen, in view of these facts of biology and geology and sociology, the man that believes that God created this world just six thousand years ago, and that on the finishing day of creation he picked up a little piece of mud and blew on it, and a living, perfect man walked off and stumbled over an apple and fell in a barrel of whisky, and is reeling off to hell—a man who will believe that

now will believe anything. Why, rather, I believe that the world has existed for millions of years, and God created man away down among the lower animals, and he has come up higher and higher and higher, and some day he will reach the stature of a full man.' He bowed himself off the platform, and the platform and the people whooped and hollered. He walked down, took my arm, and walked off with me, and I said: 'Hello, Bud. You dug up more snakes to-day than you can kill the balance of your life. It is a sin and a shame for a minister of God to dig up snakes and throw them on the crowd, for you can easily unsettle the beliefs of the weak these days, but it is mighty hard to settle them back again.' 'Well,' he said, 'Jones, I think there is less harm in the promulgation of truth than in the suppression of truth.' 'Yes, but,' I said, 'you don't know but that everything you stated was a lie. Now,' said I, 'will you, the next time you deliver your great sermon on sociology, will you slip in a parenthesis for me?' He promised that he would, and then I said: 'Tell the people I heard your lecture, and that I didn't like it. I don't like a joke on God; and tell your neighbors that I didn't know the *modus operandi* of creation, whether God on the finishing day picked up a piece of mud and blew upon it, and a living, perfect man walked away and stumbled over an apple and fell into a barrel of whisky and then into hell. I don't know what that means. But I

do know, for I was right on the spot when the thing happened, that the good God did come down to Cartersville, Georgia, nearly thirty years ago, and picked up the dirtiest piece of mud in the town, called Sam Jones, and blew upon it, and a living man for God and right has been walking forth from that day to this.' And I believe the Almighty is omnipotent!"

This evangelist once said to a crowd: "I don't believe we came from monkeys, but when I look at some of you fellows I feel sure that some of us are headed that way." Here is one of Jones's finest sayings: "This is a great world in which you and I live, brother. There may be larger worlds, and grander and better worlds than this, but this is a great world. Its mountains are God's thoughts piled up; its prairies God's thoughts spread out; its rivers God's thoughts in motion; its flowers God's thoughts in bloom; its harvests God's thoughts in bread; its dew-drops God's thoughts in pearls; and, whenever we look about us, every object smiles back upon us, and says, 'I am but the gift of a gracious Father to his wayward children.'"

Here is a gentle rap at the Eddyites: "There is one consolation in being a Christian Scientist; if you ever get in the water over your head, you need not be scared, for your head will swim all right. It is light enough to float. Just lift your handkerchief for a sail, and you will come in with the first favorable breeze."

## THE IMITATION OF CHRIST

THOMAS À KEMPIS wrote an immortal book setting forth man's highest possibility, "The Imitation of Christ." It is amazing what store men have set on the power of imitation; and the more refined they have become the higher value they have seemed to put on this capacity. It has almost been regarded as man's finest faculty. To discover the deep philosophy which explains the laudation that has been bestowed on him who has the genius for imitation is not easy. It is the occult reason of all love of art and praise of artists. The artist is simply the imitator. Imitation is the work of the painter on canvas, the sculptor in clay, marble, or bronze, the engraver with his burin, and the etcher with his *aqua fortis*. The artist labors to copy effects of light, colors of sunsets, tints of flesh, sheen of silk or satin, gleam of metal, bloom of flower or fruit, delicate intricacy of lace, subtle expression of the eye, animals' fur, or sparkle of moonlight on water. In this work, such is the fame men win that we are told the artist outlives in renown the general, the magistrate, and the statesman; indeed, never dies. What is the great artist but the consummate imitator?

This faculty of imitation is essential and natural, not grafted on by education, for it

develops almost in earliest infancy; indeed, scarce anything is more marked in childhood. And it is universal, for the most savage and brutal tribes display it, making rude images of things. Everywhere this instinct hews in wood, or carves in stone, or molds in clay some copy of things known, heard of, or imagined. The instinct is normal, natural, practically universal.

Singularly enough, it is before the product of this imitative faculty that groping, dim-eyed, unenlightened man bows down and worships. When his instinct for copying has carved out and completed its result the next instinct which springs into operation makes of his image a god, before which he prostrates himself and offers sacrifices. Is there a subtle persuasion, an intuitive assumption, in human nature, that the imitative faculty is to be man's instrument for his most valuable achievement—nay, his guide to God? The facts of human sentiment and conduct are hardly explicable otherwise. Did the Divine Intelligence implant this active power in humanity at the beginning, in order that when at last the complete, stainless Pattern should be visibly presented in the person of Jesus Christ this instinct, groping ever to find a perfect model for its copying, might not only be impelled to imitate the perfection, but be carried by the natural current of its unformulated reasoning and unconscious inference to the conclusion that what satisfies the imitative faculty as an adequate

object for its exercise must be Divine? that the ultimate outreach, arrival, and seizure of this most noble capacity can be nothing less than God? It would seem so. The lines of this logic appear to have been invisibly bedded as in the very marrow of man's bones and laid deeper than thrilling nerves.

Years not long gone witnessed in art the revival of the pre-Raphaelite or realistic school of painting, the ruling principle of which is to copy literally, to paint things as they are, instead of idealizing and painting them as the artist thinks they ought to be.

Let us say that it is this principle of fidelity to reality which must rule and insure our moral progress, through the exercise of our power of imitation, to the highest result. Christianity is the realistic imitation of Christ. Whatever objection may be made to the pre-Raphaelite principle in reproducing a faulty original, it is the only rule to be approved when we are to render the faultless model.

Sir Joshua Reynolds once complained of the difficulty of the work of a portrait painter, in that he must in each case paint "a particular man, and consequently a defective model." As any human face is defective, so is every human character, and anyone who tries to copy or imitate it has an imperfect model. One perfect Model stands singular, sublime, supreme. All imitation which has not sighted Christ shows

by its partialness and immense defect the meanness of its ideal.

An Ethiop's god hath Ethiop's lips,  
Black cheek, and woolly hair;  
The Grecian god hath a Grecian face,  
As keen-eyed and as fair.

A portrait painter or engraver may fall into two noticeable faults. One is that the portrait may show more of the personality of the artist who copies than of the subject who is copied. Longhi complained of Bartolozzi that in engraving portraits he was "most unfaithful to his archetype," and so inflexible and unsympathetic in his selfhood that, whatever the original, his engraving exhibited more his own characteristics than the features and spirit of the face he was copying.

To melt self into Christ so that the new man shall be more marked by the Christly spirit than by our peculiar native individual traits is not easy; but Paul must have arrived at it when he could say, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."

We have seen deeply stained glass in a window shone through by the sun more noticeable for the conspicuousness of its own strong bright color than for the amount of sunlight it transmitted. Our life should rather transmit Christ-light than exhibit self-color.

A second possible fault in a portrait artist is to make more of accessories than of the principal,



more of the drapery than of the person, or more of the surface than of the soul. It is far easier to copy incidentals and furnishings than to capture and render that subtle, complex, evasive something which we call the expression—the face with its spirit-meaning.

The engraving of Jerome Bonaparte, by the Müller brothers, is most famous for the skill with which the fur and lace of the Westphalian king's attire are rendered. Longhi's copy of Josephine's son, Eugene Beauharnais, is remarkable chiefly for the surpassing finish of the plume in the cap of the Viceroy of Italy; and in his picture of Washington this artist felicitated himself especially upon the hair. Wille's graver showed its highest mastership in representing satin and metal, and he sought for portraits which had rich surroundings.

Being set to copy Christ, we may give more attention to moralities and humanities, observances and respectabilities, than to spirituality and Christlikeness of heart. The reason why the hem of the robe was healing to the sick woman was because Christ was inside of the robe. The virtue of externals is in their relation to Jesus. Ceremonies, observances, ritual, and conduct are impotent and expressionless unless they drape, depend from, and set forth the living Christ as he really is.

Of arts, sculpture and painting are imitations of visible external objects; music and archi-

itecture are not. Bible prefigurations of heaven give us songs of the blessed, and the Holy City coming down from God. Building and melody are thus put into our celestial expectations, but there is no hint of statues or pictures. The imitative arts are represented only in "*We shall be like him.*" The halls of the King's palace, the paths and slopes of its gardens shall be populated and adorned not by the motionless marbles of niche and pedestal but by moving, animated copies of our Lord. Purified human beings renewed in the Divine image are to be the fair, white, living statues of heaven. To this end we work, while God works in us his own good pleasure, which is that we be conformed to the image of his Son. To shape us thus must be the purpose of life's smiting discipline and reduction.

One day the great sculptor, Michael Angelo, caught a holy thought from the block of marble he was chiseling toward its desired form, and, laying down his implements and taking up his pen, he wrote a sonnet which has this line: "The more the marble wastes the more the statue grows." A block of marble feeling itself broken and chipped away under incessant blow on blow might think, "This is destruction; this fierce man means to make an end of me; shortly there will be nothing left of me and mine." But there is that that diminishes bulk, yet enhances value. If "the Captain of our salvation" was made "perfect through suffering," shall not we also

submit to be brought toward perfection by the process of reduction?

To make us Christlike is the greatest Sculptor's purpose; let him smite!

The imitation of Christ is our business and endeavor; let us set the Lord continually before us!

## “A SUCCESSION OF STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS”

THAT is what certain psychologists say you are—you who have been supposing yourself to be somebody, in fact posing as a person in the universe. How do you like your new name? It does not resemble the one by which you were baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. There is no Christian ritual which recognizes you as “a succession of states of consciousness.” We heard the heathen, Swami Vivekananda, of India, say to a room full of men and women: “There is not a person in this room. We are not persons.” Our “advanced” psychologists seem to have caught up with the ancient and musty doctrine of this Buddhist monk. We are reminded of the speaker who began his address thus: “Ladies and gentlemen, there are three kinds of progress—progress forward, progress standing still, and progress backward.” In such a time as this it is comforting to learn that the late Professor Bowne’s great book on “Personalism” is one of the “best sellers” in our book stores.

An Irish policeman understood that it was his duty to disperse rioters. Reporting to headquarters that he had found a riot on the street, cross-questioning elicited from him the fact that

the riot had consisted of one man who was uproarious and disorderly. Being asked what he did with this rioter, the guardian of order answered, "Sure, I dispersed him." That is what certain scientists and philosophers have attempted to do with a Personal God. And it is interesting to note that having finished to their own satisfaction that somewhat gigantic task, they next proceed to "disperse" the human personality and to show that man is only "a succession of states of consciousness."

Some who have supposed themselves to be persons, living souls, morally responsible free agents, are vaguely indignant at being called "a succession of states of consciousness," as the fishwoman was when Dr. Johnson called her a parallelopipedon or a quadrilateral hypothenuse, or words to that effect. But an eminent English physician, perceiving the shallowness of such teaching and resenting such degrading and deadly doctrine concerning the human being, delivers his soul's disgust in definite denunciation and keen ridicule of the advanced psychology which calls man "a succession of states of consciousness." There is no denying that the one-sided business of dealing with the body alone tends to make materialists out of some medical students and practitioners. Yet a goodly proportion of the ablest physicians are avowedly Christian men. (No doctor not a Christian should ever be allowed to enter a Christian home professionally. Any other policy

is variously dangerous. We speak what we do know.) Not a few men of highest rank in the profession are of like spirit with a famous gynaecologist who, on parting from another physician of note, presented him with J. Stuart Holden's book, "The Price of Power," writing on the fly-leaf: "To my Friend in the Faith, a good-by gift. 'Be filled with the Spirit.'" The doctor who received that earnestly spiritual little book carried it about with him in his coat pocket for weeks, dipping into it at every opportunity, until he must have been filled with its spirit, as, indeed, his daily life showed him to be.

An inspection of the long list of names on the faculty of one great and far-famed medical college, and an inquiry into their attitude toward religion, discovered that the professors who dealt with anatomy and physiology—with the mechanical and material side of the human being—were more apt to be skeptical of spiritual realities; while those whose professional business was more nearly related to the mental side, and to its physical implements, such as the nerves and the brain, were preponderantly men of faith. And one other suggestive fact which appeared in the list of professors was that all whose specialty was to minister to women were reverent and believing men. There is something in the spirituality and religiousness of a good woman's nature which will not let the man who comes near her be an unbeliever in things high

and holy. Good women are the purification and ennoblement of the world.

The eminent English physician above referred to, addressing medical students, began thus: "I want to say what I think about current psychology. I believe that many students, by a loose and offhand notion of psychology, go into practice believing what is not true. Illogical talk drifts like a mist through hospital life, all tending to deny that the word 'psyche' (the soul) has any meaning. I hate that sort of talk." He warns his students against the dangerous and deadly influence of the materialistic notion that man can be explained on the theory that he is nothing but temporarily conscious and self-conscious matter, and shows the absurdity of describing him as only "a succession of states of consciousness."

To the young doctors he says:

The soul is or the soul is not: we must choose between the two doctrines, and our choice is a serious business for us and for those who take their cue from us. It is said that in Paris, all through the Reign of Terror, there were stupid people in the quiet parts of the city who never heard the trumbrils rumbling on their way to the guillotine, nor ever knew that anything more was happening than the usual discontent, the usual mob-oratory. If that be so, they have their parallel to-day in the stupid people who never hear the tumbrils of experimental psychology escorting Psyche, the soul, on her way to be explained away. . . . As for me, I cannot believe that I am "a succession of states of consciousness," or a stream, or anything of the kind. How a stream of states of consciousness can be conscious of itself, conscious (as is my case)

that it is neither a stream nor a state when all the time (according to certain psychologists) it is a state of a stream, and therefore is not a stream of states, yet is a stream and therefore is nothing at all, yet is conscious of streaming, and therefore must be something—how all this can mean anything in reason and common sense, let them elucidate who hold that “psyche” means nothing at all. There is something in man which is neither matter in motion, nor mere sensation, nor states in succession. This something lives on experiences, which it judges, and places, and times, and connects, and compares, and remembers. It abides in a flux of objects, all of which it has and is aware of, none of which it is. Out of ether-waves striking the sensory nerves, it creates sensations; out of sensations experiences; out of experiences its proper life. Yet these achievements are trivial compared to its more active work. For it has a will of its own, this psyche, this soul in man. In a world which is made of results, it manages somehow to be a cause. It is real, nonmaterial, permanent. It cannot be explained in terms of matter. I never could see why everything or anything should have to be made of matter in order for it to be real. . . . I believe in the reality of myself, and in the freedom of my will; and I believe that we, addressing ourselves to the universe, are as real as the universe, addressing itself to us. . . . I find no logic in the fashionable but nonsensical phrases about streams of states of consciousness. I stick to the old and respectable conviction that *I am what I am*, which is a comfortable doctrine, and more than comfortable since it does not outrage logic or common sense.

For a man to call himself a psychologist, a student of the science of the soul, and then teach that there is no psyche, no soul, is as absurd as for a man to call himself a physician and then insist that there is no body. To such psychologists our physician says: “I do not see the good of researching into Psyche without believing in



her. If a man believes that she is only a succession of states of consciousness without any one there to be conscious that these states are successive, his researches will be as vague and resultless as those of a blind man looking in a dark room for a black hat that is not in the room." Believing in psyche, this doctor believes in the communion of spirit with spirit, in the influence of soul upon soul, in telepathy and premonitions, and hypnotism, and thought-transference. He says: "I believe that psyche may call to psyche; but I do not believe that a succession, which is a word, not a thing, can call to another succession, or do anything, or be anything. I could as well imagine two calling to two, begging it to come and make four." Doubtless he agrees with Tennyson's lines:

Speak to Him, thou, for He hears; and spirit with spirit  
may meet.  
Closer is He than breathing and nearer than hands and  
feet.

Goldwin Smith, writing of the poet Cowper's religiousness, and noting especially his habit of using frequently religious forms of expression, says that such expressions can easily be translated into the language of psychology or even of physiology; and that a skeptic (he himself, for example) can bear such expressions like a philosopher, because, the implication is, they mean nothing to him beyond a mere matter of the nerves. The skeptic, to be consistent, would have

to maintain that a man's love of purity, and truth, and right, and honor can be explained by physiology, and that a mother's love for her child is a mere physiological phenomenon. It is to be hoped that the skeptic's mother is dead and beyond hearing the affront he offers her in return for her devotion. In comparison with him the man who merely botanizes on his mother's grave is a noble and elevated being.

That man cannot be completely stated in terms of physiology is the emphatic and somewhat needed message of this eminent physician to his medical students whom he endeavors to safeguard against the unspirituality, the crass, shallow, purblind, and degrading materialism which sometimes infects hospitals and medical circles, and which with the aid of so-called physiological or experimental psychology (which our physician says is really mere physiology and not psychology at all) explains away the human mind and soul until nothing is left to be conscious except the cerebral hemispheres of the man. That it is the brain which is conscious and self-conscious is a most preposterous notion, as this incisive surgeon shows in the following caricature of the random talk which he hears calling itself psychology:

Listen now to materialistic psychology's explanation of consciousness. When we strike a match there is a splutter and a flare, which are the atoms of the match and the atmosphere performing a new sort of dance. Nothing is added to what was already there; no fresh elements or forces arrive on the gay scene. The atoms are the explo-

slon, and the explosion is the atoms. They hurry up, they change step, they exchange partners—that is all. Before we struck the match they were dancing, as it were, the second figure of the Lancers; now they are dancing the third figure, pulling and pushing in that hilarious fashion which is called Kitchen-Lancers—that is all. Even so it is with consciousness. When something strikes us, there is a splutter and a flare, which are the atoms of our cerebral cells performing, in the crowded ballroom of the brain, a new sort of dance; and that is all. That dance is consciousness, and consciousness is that dance. Consciousness is neither the music which accompanies the dance, nor the reaction which follows the dance: it is the dance; it is atoms in motion. Of course to dance this particular figure the atoms must be accustomed to dancing, and there must be enough of them to make up a set, so many ladies and so many gentlemen: and then they can dance till they are tired, and that dance is consciousness. But, we know, it is possible to dance less than sixteen; indeed, a child will dance all alone, without so much as a barrel-organ. Even so it is with consciousness. In its simplest form consciousness may be observed even in very humble structures. As, by putting a penny in the slot, we obtain, if the automatic machine be going, a measured projection of chocolate or of scent, or of two foreign bodies called cigarettes, or an electric current, or the exhibition of a moving picture, or the liberation of a balance, so, from the amœba, if it be going, we get something out, some faint consciousness, a mere glimmer; still, it is the real article, what there is of it. When we stand in the presence of nobler creatures, such as the oyster, we see movements more definitely purposive; and begin to feel fairly sure that the sun of consciousness has arisen. We are for a time puzzled, because the oyster has several centers set apart, and far apart, for consciousness; and it is hard to see how an oyster can be conscious in three or four places at once; and this difficulty is not diminished but, rather, is increased when we contemplate the earthworm, which is a sort of common lodging house of consciousness, with a double row of cubicles right and left all the way up. But, when we come to the frog,

we know where we are; for we can see at a glance that the cerebral hemispheres must be conscious of the rest of the frog, and that the rest of the frog cannot be conscious of the cerebral hemispheres. Here, at or about this level of life, we find special organs, brains, so complex that they must of necessity be conscious. But of what are they conscious? Is it of themselves, of their own atomic motion, their own chemical changes? Not a bit of it; they are conscious of sensations, dim pleasures and pains, heat and cold, light and darkness, taste and smell. They feel, they perceive. From this point onward, it is easy to observe the development of consciousness; the brain, as we ascend the scale of life, beginning to divide its experiences into self and not-self. At first it was conscious; at last it is self-conscious. Henceforth, it remembers, imagines, thinks, and wills, or thinks that it wills. It reads and writes, pursues the fine arts, invents God, takes an active interest in politics, and, if it be lodged in a male skull, has a vote. Behold, gentlemen, yourselves: you who are so highly differentiated brains that you can understand anything, even the false doctrine which I have here repeated to you. For I no more believe that my brain is self-conscious than I believe that two and two make five. All the same, I have given you a fair caricature of the random talk which calls itself psychology.

Our physician thinks he sees where psychology has gone wrong and he points it out to his students as follows:

She is so anxious to be a complete science that she refuses to be surprised at the universe: she affects the cold matter-of-fact demeanor of the sciences which are exact and complete. They cut me, they cut me dead, these sciences; they fix a vacant stare, and slay me with their noble birth; and psychology, that she may get into their set, imitates them. It is not their way, to wonder that the universe is here; they are sure that nothing in nature is unnatural or supernatural, and that the infinite is only the rest of the finite. Chemistry is not surprised when salt dissolves in water,

nor botany when a bulb turns into a hyacinth, nor biology when an egg, discarding its original design for a pair of gills, turns into a chicken. They would be ashamed, these quiet gentlewomen, of gasping and exclaiming over normal phenomena; they never forget themselves in Ohs and Ahs, like the crowd at the Crystal Palace when the rockets explode. Therefore psychology, that she may be admitted to their circle, apes their tone.

She insists on it, that she is a science. In vain her wise servant, Professor James, tells her that she is not; and that, of all places, in his "Text-book of Psychology." His first words to her, on page 1, are to the effect that she is not a science: and his last words, on page 468, are to the same effect. He begins by shaking the dust of her house off his feet, and he ends by shaking them again, to make sure. On page 1 he calls her a provisional beginning of learning, and says that she must stick to her own arbitrarily selected problems, and ignore all others. "Psychology," he says on page 2, "as a natural science, deals with things in a partial and provisional way. In addition to the 'material world,' which the other sciences of nature assume, she assumes additional data peculiarly her own, and leaves it to more developed parts of philosophy to test their ulterior significance and truth." On page 468, the last page of all, he fairly lets himself go: "*This is no science, it is only the hope of a science.* The matter of a science is with us. Something definite happens when to a certain brain-state a certain *sciousness* corresponds. A genuine glimpse into what it is would be the scientific achievement, before which all past achievements would pale. *But, at present, psychology is in the condition of physics before Galileo and the laws of motion, of chemistry before Lavoisier and the notion that mass is preserved in all reactions. The Galileo and the Lavoisier of psychology will be famous men indeed when they come, as come they one day surely will, or past successes are no index to the future. When they do come, however, the necessities of the case will make them 'metaphysical.'*"

The italics, I am proud to say, are mine. And there the book ends, with a final warning to Psychology that her

assumptions are provisional and revisable, and that she is groping in great darkness. . . . Now I love a text-book of psychology which begins and ends with the assurance that I need not be frightened, though the experimental physiological psychologists furiously rage together, and imagine a vain thing. Professor James is like Jehu. Psychology paints her face, and tires her head, and looks out of the window; and "*Throw her down,*" says he, and treads her under foot. Then, when he has gone in, and has eaten and drunk in the house of Philosophy, "*Go,*" says he, "*see now this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter.*" And they go, and find no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of the hands.

She *assumes* the material world. It has an inverted comma on either side of it, and she assumes it in spite of those warning signals. She *assumes*, also, certain additional data peculiarly her own, which have not had their ulterior significance tested, nor their truth. Who told her that she might do that? Who gave her those data? If nobody gave them to her, if she simply took them, in what sense are they her own? I might *assume*, provisionally, the name of John Sebastian Bach: but would it be my name? And what is the difference, if any, between the ulterior significance of a datum, and its truth? Or between ulterior significance and any other sort of significance? And what measure of faith do we owe to the hope of a science?

"*At present psychology is in the condition of physics before Galileo.*" That is a blessed sentence; and I will have it framed and glazed, and hung where I can lie in bed and look at it next time I am ill. It is a great help; it leaves the mind so free, to have such a text before the eyes. Even more soothing is the promise that future psychologists, who will really know what psyche is—alas, I shall not live to see that day—will be, by the necessities of the case, philosophers. There they are, that angelic host, the necessities of the case. Far above the additional data which have not yet been tested, and the great darkness in which this unscientific science gropes, the necessities of the case stand and wait. What will they do, what will they

not do, in that day of Armageddon when they shall take Psychology seriously in hand?

Suppose that I ordered a coat; and that it arrived piecemeal, a loose lot of parts, cut out but not sewn together. With the coat, this letter: "Please to kindly regard this consignment as provisional and revisable. We are forwarding to you the data of your coat, as per esteemed order. Their ulterior significance must be tested by some more developed firm. This is not a coat, it is only the hope of a coat. We send you the matter of a coat, something definite, which has happened: but we regret that we have not been able to obtain a genuine glimpse into what it is. When we do you will be pleased to find that the coat, by the necessities of the case, will put itself together. Hoping for the continuance of your valuable patronage." Such a letter would make me think that tailoring is not an art, any more than psychology is a science, for all her assumptions. And I make bold to say that Psychology, or, at any rate, a certain talkative lady who calls herself by that name, is not very scrupulous what she assumes, nor very careful of her honor. . . . And when she says that we are streams of states of consciousness, she is talking nonsense, not science. The soul is not explainable by physiology.

## BURYING MATHEMATICS

A THEOLOGICAL professor recently said that our ministry may be too apologetic. A pulpit occupying itself predominantly with the defense of the faith is undesirable and unwise. A gospel minister who takes the truth of his message for granted and confidently gives it a positive proclamation with an air of unhesitating conviction, as did Spurgeon and Moody, is likely to carry conviction home to the heart of the average hearer and be a powerful preacher. It is possible to be unduly concerned for the defense of God's eternal truth. The foundations of the Christian faith are deep and indestructible.

A reminiscence of college days is that the sophomores have a custom of burying mathematics. A mysterious procession of students winds through the night to some secluded spot and inters with singular ceremonies a number of volumes—algebra, geometry, or analytics. It is reported that they bury or burn mathematics somewhere every year. But no matter how often this grotesque ceremony is repeated, the bee still keeps to her geometry, building her cell on the same good old plan; the snowflake shapes its geometric polyhedrons as before; the comet keeps its calculable track; the planets roll along the same invisible elliptical grooves; the rifle ball follows



its mathematic curve; the flood of crystal and emerald at Niagara still falls regular into the abyss; the trains of numeric reasoning still roll safe to sure conclusions along well-worn tracks that are not torn up nor spread apart; the square root and the cube root uncover themselves to the same old lines of approach, and the sailor still ciphers out with precision, by the aid of trustworthy logarithmic tables, his whereabouts on the great deep from shore to far-off shore.

Evidently nature has not heard of the funeral which the students conducted, and does not know that they have made an end of mathematics. Even the great omniscient God above does not seem to know of it, for he too still geometrizes. Moreover this world's business still goes on by the rules of arithmetic, and the sophomores themselves presently find that there is not even physical subsistence for them—not so much as bread-and-butter salvation in this life except in accordance with the reckoning of the mathematics they buried.

As it is with the principles of the science of numbers, so it is with Christian truth. As the mathematical formulas, which were stamped even on the earliest cosmical vapors, refuse to be set aside by a ceremony, so the great spiritual laws, part and parcel of God's universe, of which Christianity is the exposition, are not to be set aside. And whenever we hear the toot-horns of those wise fools who attempt to dispose of the

Bible, of Christianity, of God, and of religion, by no matter what ceremony, argument, resolutions, or dictum, we say to ourselves, "The sophomores are burying mathematics again," and we know that they must presently come back to them and live by them or starve and perish.

The truth wants publishing and embodying more than it wants arguing and proving. Largely the gospel carries its own evidences, goes armed with its own credentials. It has prevailed by proclamation and by its fruits rather than by syllogisms. It needs not defending as much as it needs obeying, and its primal command to all who accept it is, "Go, teach all nations." There is no occasion to fear that, while the church is at work with might and main converting the nations, some small infidel will stick his tiny crowbar into the everlasting foundations of the faith and pry them up. Our chief business is to give the truth a tongue and a temple in every land of human habitation, and then, though the antichristian sorcerers, fakirs, and medicine men perform their manifold incantations—though the skeptical sophomores go through the form of burying or burning the Christian mathematics as often as they please—they will not prevent the world from finding out that the foundation of God standeth sure, and that the gospel of Jesus Christ furnishes the only working plan for human welfare, temporal and eternal.

## “WE HAVE SEEN HIS STAR”

THE traveler southward from Jerusalem soon sees a little village straggling along the western slope of a rocky hill, crowned by an enormous pile of buildings called the Convent of the Nativity. The village is Bethlehem; the convent is said by a tradition, reaching back beyond Constantine into the second century of the Christian era, to stand over the birthplace of Christ. In the limestone rock under this huge building is a vault, or cave, called the Grotto of the Nativity. (To this day in that country caves are frequently used as stables.) In this rock grotto one sees, by the dim light of swinging silver lamps, a silver star sunk into a marble slab in the floor to mark the supposed spot of the birth of Jesus. Standing over it, one wonders if proud Bethlehem caught the reflection of the wise men's star in a mirror, by some art fixed it there, and cut out the image with a diamond, to sink it permanently upon the spot where Mary brought forth her Babe; and looking down upon it, the Christian traveler is moved by a feeling of reverence which, when it turns toward the divine, is worship.

One day, almost two thousand years ago, three strangers arriving in Jerusalem from the further Orient said: “We have seen his star and are come

to worship him." The Greek New Testament calls them Magoi, an appellation which points to Persia, being the designation of a class of Persian priests and nobles. A coincidence between an ancient sacred prophecy and a strange appearance in the heavens accounts for their journey. These men, versed in accessible literature, may easily have been familiar with the Jewish Scriptures in which the prophet Daniel predicts the coming of the Messiah, fixing it from a date in the civil history of the Persians themselves, namely, the commandment of Cyrus for the rebuilding of Jerusalem. As Eastern sages were generally astronomical observers and students of the stars, an unusual stellar phenomenon was a sign placed where the Magi would be most certain to notice and regard it. Whatever its precise nature, whether, as Kepler believed, a conjunction of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars which happened about that time, or, as others suggest, a comet which was then visible for seventy days, matters not. The token was suited to them; they observed it thoughtfully, were impressed by it, and followed it with reverent, eager, and expectant spirits.

A cloudy pillar before Israel went,  
An angel kept Tobias in the way,  
A star led up the Magians to the tent  
Wherein the new-born Child of glory lay.  
Therefore the wayfarer will always say:  
"Praise be to Him who guides his servants' feet!"

We are in a universe of manifold utilities. The Creator is a great economist, making one thing serve many uses. Nothing lives entirely for its own, not even the huge insensate matter-bulk we call the world. As the lighthouse, which is a home for the family dwelling in it, is a beacon to the furthest passer-by on the outskirts of its illumination, fortressing its own indwellers from the fury of the elements and at the same time sending abroad the radiant benefit of its light through three hundred and sixty degrees of the circle within the horizon; so a world, which hangs in space as the home for a race, sends light afar like a foreign missionary to render signal service to the most distant traveler whom it can stretch its philanthropic beams to reach.

On land and ocean men have rejoiced at the shining of a guiding star. The thankful mariner has steered over the pathless sea by one steadfast star that befriends him out of the North. The caravan crawling by night across the trackless desert makes the tinkling of the camel bells follow the twinkling of the star that points the way. In years now happily forever gone, the bondman fleeing through the forests, wading swamps and swimming streams to elude the bloodhounds' scent and escape the overseer's lash, hiding by day and hurrying fast by night, rejoiced to see a kindly star that burned in the northern sky like a light in Liberty's window, signaling the way to Canada's friendly free soil, to manhood,

and to the powerful shelter of England's flag flying north of the border.

As surely in spiritual realms as on sea and land a guiding light shines from above. In the sky of every human soul is some starry revelation which, if followed, may lead to the manifold liberty with which Christ makes men free. Even a false religion may possibly have a glimpse of some truth, entire loyalty to which would logically bring its votaries to Christianity. It may be a part of holy Christian strategy to move them on, as Paul did Athens, to the reasonable conclusion and only possible completion of truths they already admit.

If other evidence of knowledge and wisdom there were none, the course of the Magi in following the star entitles them to be called wise. They were not disobedient to the heavenly vision. They did not neglect a celestial token, however small. Tradition says they were three kings. Better than that, they are royal exemplars to all seekers after truth.

The very least of faith's dim rays beamed on them from  
afar,  
And that same hour they rose from off their thrones to  
track the star.

So following, those obedient souls came in sight of Malachi's "Sun of Righteousness," and in like manner one little shining point may lead us to the glory that fills the heaven of heavens. In all things we come to what is hidden beyond by

attending earnestly to what is revealed and near. "The little brook trickling among the summer hills on which the sheep are bleating," will lead us, if we follow it, to the great universal sea on which the ships of all the world are sailing, whereon we may embark for any port in any zone. To the individual spirit one serious thought, one earnest mood, one flash of perception, one dart of conviction, one pang of dissatisfaction, one momentary melting of the heart, one tender recollection, one solemn apprehension, may be a ray shot out of heaven from the star which is intended to bring that soul to the Saviour.

In part the Magi were led forth upon their journey by prophetic predictions. For ages the promise of a Redeemer was the bright particular star shining out of the Sacred Scriptures, thrilling the hearts of devout Hebrews who waited for the consolation of Israel with the joy of Messianic expectations.

Never while any sense of loveliness survives in a certain beholder can the limpid and quiet charm of certain summer dawns on the Italian lakes be forgotten. Often at three or four o'clock in the morning, satisfied with sweet sleep, he leaned from his window to wonder at the beauty of God's world at peace in its dewy and tender coolness as he looked on sky and lake, alpine foothills and sleeping village. Above only the morning star was visible, and nothing but the ripple of wavelets on the pebbles was audible below. Over

the sky was diffused a questionable beginning, a faint peradventure of morning light. On the ground and in the air no creature seemed astir. All the world was holding its breath as if in hushed expectancy. Nothing moved and no distinct sign was given of that which was to be, save that one solitary watcher in the sky above the eastern mountains held up his torch, its lam-bent flame slow fading, like a pasha's courier running before to signal the coming of his master. A secret surmise of possible glory ran through the silent world, a thrill of apprehension that the hosts of light were about to scale the high rocky alpine rampart which defended the horizon, and that sunrise might any moment burst wide open the gates of the morning and come marching in with its dazzling escort to take possession of the earth and the heavens.

The watching of what comes after God's morning star is a hallowed, ecstatic, and memorable experience. The wise men from the East and illumined saints like Simeon and Anna searched for the signs which heralded the advent of the Light of the World. Daybreak came nearly two thousand years ago; twenty Christian centuries have sung, "the darkness is past and the true light now shineth"; and now the world's day is moving toward millennial noon.



## THE RELIGION OF GILDER'S POETRY

RICHARD WATSON GILDER'S poetry is rich, delicate, refined, artistic, beautiful. In it there is nothing flippant or cheap, irreverent or carnal. Its spirituality is an antidote to the manifold materialism of our time. Its passion for beauty and exquisite joy therein are free from mere sensuousness. It is manifestly the output of a nature both sensitive and strong. It seems not artificial and purposed, but spontaneous, the utterance of one who has a gift and a call to sing. Most of it is essentially lyrical, full of feeling, genuine, deep, intense, uttering in simple purity and in words felicitous, musical, effective its cry of aspiration, of love, of faith, of admiration, of patriotism, of adoration. It is ethical in every note, and makes pervasively for righteousness. The London Daily News says that Gilder's is "a scholarly muse, yet withal a muse of fire and energy and passion." This is true, but incomplete. It deserves and requires to be added that his muse is also religious in sentiment and Christian in belief. Faith and faithfulness breathe in his lines. All is morally wholesome and saving. As we follow the flow of his verse his own words seem applicable to their author:

Thy mind is like a crystal brook  
Wherein clean creatures live at ease;

and we cannot but feel that he has obeyed his own injunction:

In the home of thy spirit be true;  
Speak the message which in thee burns.

And surely no man who has not kept his own heart pure is likely to exhort his brother man in this fashion:

Keep pure thy soul!  
Then shalt thou take the whole  
Of delight: thine shall be all the beauty,  
The perfume and the pageant, the melody and mirth  
Of the golden day and the starry night,  
Of heaven and of earth,  
O, keep pure thy soul!

Gilder's attitude toward nature, whose beauties stir his sensibilities as the breathing air moves the strings of a windharp, does not stop short of being devout toward the Author and Ruler of nature. To him the alternating splendors of dawn and evening are the rhymes of God, and sunset moves him to this reverent and trustful good-night to the world's great Guardian:

Now the long shadows eastward creep,  
The golden sun is setting;  
Take, Lord! the worship of our sleep,  
The praise of our forgetting.

He wears from first to last the nobly serious countenance of one to whom existence is a lofty privilege and an august responsibility, as sacred as these lines avow:

Each moment holy is, for out from God  
Each moment flashes forth a human soul.

Holy each moment is, for back to him  
Some wandering soul each moment home returns.

But it is in the poem "Holy Land" that we plainly see what most makes life sacred to him. Because Christ walked the earth we walk on, because the sun and moon which shone on him shine now on us and light our pathway as they lighted his, therefore Gilder asks:

Since then, shall mortal dare  
With hase thought front the ever-sacred sky—  
Soil with foul deed the ground whereon He laid  
In holy death his pale, immortal head?—

reading which, one recalls from a less deeply devout source some lines of similar motive:

Look starward; stand far and unearthy,  
Free-souled as a banner unfurled.  
Be worthy, O brother, be worthy!  
For God's Son was the price of the world.

Immortality is to Gilder not doubtful. Three voices, the voices of Love and Birth and Death, come crying to him from heaven, and this is what they cry:

There is a deathless human soul:—  
It is not lost, as is the fiery flame  
That dies into the undistinguished whole.  
Ah, no; it separate is, distinct as God—  
Nor any more than he can it be killed;  
Then fearless give thy body to the clod,  
For naught can quench the light that once it filled!

Looking deathward, his prayer turns thus to the Maker and Redeemer of men, the Lord of Life;

O Lord of Light, steep thou our souls in thee!  
That when the daylight trembles into shade,  
And falls the silence of mortality,  
And all is done, we shall not be afraid,  
But pass from light to light; from earth's dull gleam  
Into the very heart and heaven of our dream!

Like many poetic souls who feel how much greater is life than language, he hesitated at the fixed, framed creed his neighbor stands to repeat in the house of God, yet there surges through his soul an elemental faith deeper than creeds, larger than all forms of words—a groundswell, vast and mighty, rolling up and in from primal and infinite deeps. When cast-iron statements and human definitions stick in his throat, and his voice ceases from the concerted recital, it is with something akin to the feeling which Wesley had when he wrote:

Weary of all this wordy strife,  
These notions, forms, and modes, and names,  
To Thee, the Way, the Truth, the Life,  
Whose love my simple heart inflames—  
Divinely taught, at last I fly,  
With thee and thine to live and die.

And Gilder's passionate and intense appeal to the Lord and Saviour of men is direct to the Christ of his own soul and not to another man's idea of him:

Christ of Judæa, look thou in my heart!  
Do I not love thee, look to thee, in thee  
Alone have faith of all the sons of men—  
Faith deepening with the weight and woe of years?

Pure soul and tenderest of all that came  
Into this world of sorrow, hear my prayer:  
Lead me, yea, lead me deeper into life,  
This suffering human life wherein thou livest  
And breathe'st still, and hold'st thy way divine.  
'Tis here, O pitying Christ, where thee I seek,  
Here where the strife is fiercest; where the sun  
Beats down upon the highway thronged with men,  
And in the raging mart. O! deeper lead  
My soul into the living world of souls  
Where thou dost move.

But lead me, Man Divine,  
Where'er thou will'st, only that I may find  
At the long journey's end thy image there,  
And grow more like to it. For art not thou  
The human shadow of the infinite Love  
That made and fills the endless universe?  
The very Word of him, the unseen, unknown  
Eternal Good that rules the summer flower  
And all the worlds that people starry space!

To the dull, blind skeptic few, who think, with the rough surgeon in Tennyson's poem "In the Hospital," that "the good Lord Jesus has had his day," Gilder speaks his powerful resisting word in "The Passing of Christ." He wants to know if they really think that the fierce rays of science which search through every cranny show nothing divine left on the earth; that because there are no physical miracles the Holy One is gone; that the Son of God, the Hope and Saviour of men, has been hurled from the throne of the hearts of the world? He asks if they mean to say that he who made birth holy and brought to the eyes of death visions of heavenly light; who looked through shame and sin and saw sanctity

lingering or germinant within; who spoke the tenderest, truest words that sorrow has ever heard, and gladdened a world of men; whose life and death and memory have sanctified the earth, have been the stay and support of millions of noble lives, and have led the world on an upward path—do they say that he has lost his hold and is passing from power? To all such despairing deniers of our Lord this poet opposes a strenuous affirmative answer:

Ah no!

Behold Him now where he comes!  
 Not the Christ of our subtle creeds,  
 But the Lord of our hearts, of our homes,  
 Of our hopes, our prayers, our needs;  
 The brother of want and blame,  
 The lover of women and men  
 With a love that puts to shame  
 All passions of mortal ken;

. . . . .

'Tis he, as none other can,  
 Makes free the spirit of man,  
 And speaks in darkest night  
 One word of awful light,  
 That strikes, through the dreadful pain  
 Of life, a reason sane—  
 That word divine which brought  
 A universe from naught.

Ah no, thou life of the heart,  
 Never shalt thou depart!  
 Not till the leaven of God  
 Shall lighten each human clod;  
 Not till the world shall climb  
 To thy height, serene, sublime,  
 Shall the Christ who enters our door  
 Pass to return no more.

If aught seems lacking in the words used or the titles accorded here to Jesus Christ, one can easily and plainly learn from Gilder's Christmas hymn and Easter verses and other poems that he whom the angels sang, and the shepherds went to find, and the wise men sought and worshiped, and who left an empty tomb where he had lain dead, was the Lord of heaven and earth, the King of kings, the Son of God and Saviour of mankind.

By far the most widely and frequently quoted of all that Gilder has written is his poem of only eight lines, entitled "The Song of a Heathen." The poet supposes this heathen man to be a sojourner in Galilee in the year 32 of the Christian era. He has heard the conflicting reports which filled the land concerning the strange Prophet, the mysterious Teacher who journeys to and fro, and who is by some reprobated and denounced as a political schemer, an impostor, an evildoer, and by others called a messenger from God, the true Messiah, the long-expected Redeemer. One feels that this thoughtful and reasoning heathen who speaks must have seen Jesus; perhaps has mingled somewhere in the crowd that thronged about him, looking upon his impressive face and listening to his wonderful words, and then has gone away to brood and ponder over it all until at last his captive soul utters its confession in the following sane and decisive words:

If Jesus Christ is a man—  
And only a man—I say  
That of all mankind I cleave to him,  
And to him will I cleave away.

If Jesus Christ is a God—  
And the only God—I swear  
I will follow him through heaven and hell,  
The earth, the sea, and the air!

Although Gilder does not say so, it is left to us to perceive, what is perfectly plain, that the heathen man's affirmation contains a great doctrine and befits all thoughtful and reasonable men alike, from the first Christian century down to the twentieth and on to the end of earth's history. "What think ye of Christ?" is a question which no age and no intelligent race can ever let alone. It will not let them alone; it forces itself on every tribe and nation; it will finally hunt down and confront every human being on the earth, for to this end the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. To this insistent question one hears numerous and widely differing answers given. It is sometimes intellectually confusing to hear what the many voices say. With the fine shadings of definition between those who almost agree and the point-blank opposition of those who vehemently differ, the listener is sometimes bewildered and perplexed in mind, and at a loss how to choose among the varying views. But practically he should not be at any loss. The push of Gilder's resolute poem is to the point that only one course is really open to the man who seriously considers Christ



and reflects on all that is written and said of him.

For on the lowest of all decent estimates of Jesus there is but one thing for the rational and earnest soul to do, and that is to follow him. At the end of all dispute, and after all reductions and detractions, there remains enough of mysterious majesty, of singular purity, of lofty wisdom, and of superhuman love to command reverence and bind in affectionate attachment all sincere and thoughtful men. If a searching, weighing, and balancing mind stands and listens all down the line from right to left, from the most conservative orthodoxy to the most unbridled and venturesome heresy, to all that is said concerning the nature, mission, and power of Christ, the only respectable and sane conclusion that is possible at last must amount substantially to this: "I have listened, and pondered, and prayed. And now for myself I say, I hold to Jesus Christ. Him must I follow and obey. He is my soul's central orb. If only he will take me along with him, and turn my night to day, and give me warmth and light, why, he shall be my sun, I will be his satellite." That is what Gilder's heathen said in Galilee in A. D. 32. That is what every serious-minded, fair-minded human being ought to say to-day.

Doubtless the reverent spirit, decisive faith, and forcible right-reasoning of this poet are measurably due to heredity and early nurture.

It was his honor to be the son of the Rev. William H. Gilder, a member of the New York East Conference, whose patriotism and self-sacrifice and Christian devotion are tenderly sung, though without mention of his name, in the fourteen verses entitled "Pro Patria." Like his divine Master, he laid down his life for others, dying that he might minister comfort to human misery. The chaplain of the Fortieth New York Volunteers, he voluntarily entered the army smallpox hospital at Brandy Station, Virginia, to care for the suffering soldiers, and himself died there of the foul disease on April 13, 1863. Of this Christian martyr the son sings, filially and proudly:

Life was to him most dear—home, children, wife—  
But, dearer still than life,  
Duty—that passion of the soul which from the sod  
Alone lifts man to God.

The pesthouse entering fearless—stricken he fearless fell,  
Knowing that all was well;  
The high mysterious Power whereof mankind has dreamed  
To him not distant seemed.

No one can wonder that to all the sons and daughters of godly ancestry, children of parents passed into the skies, this gifted and prophetic singer writes:

Despise not thou thy father's ancient creed!  
Of his pure life it was the golden thread  
Whereon bright days were gathered bead by bead,  
Till death laid low that dear and reverend head.  
From olden faith how many a glorious deed  
Hath lit the world; its blood-stained banner led  
The martyrs heavenward; yea, it was the seed  
Of knowledge, whence our modern freedom spread.

Not often has man's *credo* proved a snare—

But a deliverance, a sign, a flame

To purify the dense and pestilent air,

Writing on pitiless heavens one pitying Name;

And 'neath the shadow of the dread eclipse

It shines on dying eyes and pallid lips.

Nor is it strange that a minister's son should have the compassionate heart, the sensitive conscience, and the sense of responsibility which ask:

O, how shall I help to right the world which is going wrong?

And what can I do to hurry the promised time of peace?

The day of work is short and the night of sleep is long;

And whether to pray or preach, or whether to sing a song,

To plow in my neighbor's field, or to seek the golden fleece,

Or to sit with my hands in my lap, and wish for ill to cease?

The world knows that this poet did not fold idle hands, nor sit in selfish ease, nor seek the golden fleece, neglecting the needs of mankind, but remembered the forgotten, and went down into the slums, crucifying æsthetic tastes and delicate sensibilities, and toiling to the last limit of strength for the purifying of human homes and the bettering of human lives, for the possible saving of the bodies and souls of his brothers and sisters for whom, as surely as for Richard Watson Gilder, he knew that Christ died.











